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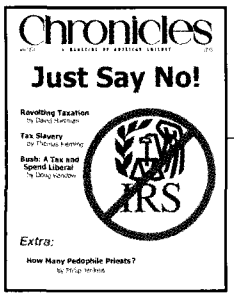

PERSPECTIVE

Tax Slavery 10
by Thomas Fleming

For a conquered people.

VIEWS

Revolting Taxation 14
by David Hartman
How federal taxation usurped federalism.

Tax-and-Spend Politics, Bush-style 17
by Doug Bandow
Outgunning the Democrats.

NEWS

High Marginal Tax Rates on Saving Hurt Us All 20
by Stephen J. Entin
Bush's incremental reform.

The Naked Truth of Tax Policy 22
by Dan R. Mastromarco
Cloaks of deception.

How Many Priests? 24
by Philip Jenkins
The numbers tell the story.

REVIEWS

Rule Columbia! 27
by Daniel McCarthy

Andrew J. Bacevich, ed.: *The Imperial Tense*
John Newhouse: *Imperial America*

Philip Jenkins on Edward F. Fitzgerald's 30
Bank's Bandits: The Untold Story of the Original Green Berets ◆ **Patrick J. Walsh** on R.F. Foster's *W.B. Yeats: A Life, Vol. II* ◆ **Peter J. Lynch** on David E. Bernstein's *You Can't Say That!* ◆ **Catharine Savage Brosman** on David Clinton's *Tocqueville, Lieber, and Bagehot: Liberalism Confronts the World* ◆

CORRESPONDENCE

Letter From Moscow: Gigantic in Everything 40
by Curtis Cate

Letter From Sweden: The Swedes Say "No" to the Euro 42
by Alberto Carosa

Letter From Texas: The Unvanquished Family 43
by Denne Sweeney

Letter From Chile: The Road to Ensenada 45
by Mary Kohler

VITAL SIGNS

RACE: The Illinois Negro Code 49
by Steve Berg

INDUSTRY: Blood and Iron Pyrite 51
by Eric J. Obermeyer

COLUMNS

THE WESTERN FRONT 13
by Paul Gottfried

PRINCIPALITIES & POWERS 35
by Samuel Francis

THE ROCKFORD FILES 37
by Scott P. Richert

EUROPEAN DIARY 39
by Andrei Navrozov

THE AMERICAN INTEREST 47
by Srdja Trifkovic

IN THE DARK 54
Monster, The Fog of War
by George McCartney

THE HUNDREDTH MERIDIAN 56
by Chilton Williamson, Jr.

THE BEST REVENGE 58
by Anthony Santelli

DEPARTMENTS

POLEMICS & EXCHANGES 4

AMERICAN PROSCENIUM 6

CULTURAL REVOLUTIONS 7

POETRY
Intolerance: A Memo and 12
Redcoats by Paul Lake

ON THE COVER

Cover and inside illustrations by H. Ward Sterett and Melanie Anderson.

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A publication of The Rockford Institute.
Editorial and Advertising Offices:
928 North Main Street, Rockford, IL 61103.
Website: *www.chroniclesmagazine.org*
Editorial Phone: (815) 964-5054.
Advertising Phone: (815) 964-5813.
Subscription Department: P.O. Box 800,
Mount Morris, IL 61054. Call 1-800-877-5459.

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Chronicles: A Magazine of American Culture (ISSN 0887-5731) is published monthly for $39.00 (foreign subscriptions add $12 for surface delivery, $48 for Air Mail) per year by The Rockford Institute, 928 North Main Street, Rockford, IL 61103-7061. Preferred periodical postage paid at Rockford, IL and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Chronicles, P.O. Box 800, Mount Morris, IL 61054.

The views expressed in *Chronicles* are the authors' alone and do not necessarily reflect the views of The Rockford Institute or of its directors. Unsolicited manuscripts cannot be returned unless accompanied by a self-addressed stamped envelope.

Chronicles
Vol. 28, No. 4 April 2004
Printed in the United States of America

On Soros

In "George Soros, Postmodern Villain" (*Views*, February), Srdja Trifkovic certainly offered an extensive, if somewhat random, account of activities undertaken by organizations affiliated with Soros. However, with all of the facts laid out, I cannot decide whether they amount to Soros' attempts "to destroy the remaining bastions of the family, sovereign nationhood, and Christian Faith" or his pursuit of what he believes will liberalize and democratize the societies of Eastern Europe. As an Eastern European, I would gladly pursue many of the policies mentioned in the article.

Also, I believe that the public debate about whether financial arbitrage is "invariably detrimental" has long ended. Financial "gamblers" such as Soros look to capitalize on market inefficiencies and exploit bad government policies—hardly "invariably detrimental" activities.

—*Nemanja Mijic*
Boston, MA

Dr. Trifkovic Replies:

If Mr. Mijic "would gladly pursue many of the policies mentioned in the article"—including the promotion of abortion in demographically moribund societies, relentless "gay" propaganda, the legalization of hard drugs, the imposition of Sharptonite "affirmative action" for allegedly disadvantaged groups, the liquidation of traditional education in favor of its postmodern substitutes, and all that administered by the corrupt heirs of a deracinated Party *nomenklatura* of yore—he is reading the wrong magazine.

I did not lay out anywhere near "all of the facts" in the article, which provided a mere sampler from Mr. Soros' rich smorgasbord, and so I gladly take this opportunity to add just one more fact. In 1994, Mr. Soros—a militant atheist—launched his Project Death in America (PDIA) and provided $15 million for its initial funding. PDIA supports physician-assisted suicide. (Soros' mother, a member of the pro-suicide Hemlock Society, killed herself, and Soros mentions unsympathetically that his languishing father clung to life for far too long.) It works to create a network of doctors that will "reach into one-fourth of America's hospitals" and, in a turn of phrase chillingly worthy of Orwell, lead to "the creation of innovative models of care and the development of new curricula on dying."

I agree with Mr. Mijic that "financial arbitrage" is not necessarily detrimental, but he is wrong to suggest that Mr. Soros capitalizes on existing market inefficiencies and exploits "bad government policies." In the Third World, Soros artificially engineers "inefficiencies" to his profit and everyone else's grief. He typically begins by buying stocks in the local market and creating momentum. When small investors follow and push the paper values up, he cashes in, cuts and runs, and, in his wake, leaves a collapsed local market, ruined lives, and, often, political instability. Far from promoting free enterprise, he is targeting newly opened, fragile financial markets—Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, Mexico—insufficiently seasoned in dealing with foreign investors, especially those with megafunds like his Quantum. His specialty is speculative investments that take advantage of the economic shifts he artificially induces.

In a *New Yorker* profile in 1995, Mr. Soros reflected on the parallels between himself and the God of the Old Testament and said that, as a child, he thought of himself as superhuman. Six decades later, this philanthropist-from-Hell apparently no longer merely thinks so. His yearning for man's God-like "freedom" is a psychosis that cannot stop short of the freedom to choose death over life. The sooner he makes that very personal choice, the better for the rest of us.

On Trusting the GOP

I am pleased that Stephen Moore's Club for Growth Advocacy fought valiantly on the House floor last November against the abomination that was President Bush's Medicare prescription-drug bill—which has now become law, adding another $395 billion to the mushrooming federal debt. (See "Night Moves," *Vital Signs*, February.) Likewise, Mr. Moore should be commended by all fiscal conservatives for acknowledging just how incorrigibly

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profligate this Republican President and Congress are and how little the Karl Rove political operation values the independent judgment of legislators. The thuggish floor managers for "Bush 43" doubtless feel no shame for their actions. Yet, I must sincerely ask Mr. Moore why he is unashamed to remain within the GOP. Why not break completely with this crowd? If not even 20 percent of Republican members in either the House or Senate were willing to oppose this reckless measure, then what is the value in having a Republican Party in the first place?

Defending the "heroes" of the drug-bill fight against primary challenges instigated by the White House, while laudable, is insufficient. Far better would be a strategy of running third-party challengers this November against the roughly 200 socialist Republicans who cowered before the LBJ Republican residing at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue.

—James Moses
New York, NY

Mr. Moore Replies:

James Moses asks: Why stay in the GOP in the wake of the GOP sellout on Medicare? My answer is that we need to try to rebuild the Republican Party rather than abandon it. We need to take on the Republican establishment when appropriate and find good primary challengers to liberal Republicans. The Republicans can be counted on to do the right thing when every other option has been exhausted. This is the party of Reagan, and we need to keep it focused on smaller government, lower taxes, and more personal responsibility. The alternative—the big-government Democrats—is unthinkable.

On *The Unsleeping Eye*

There is no current American commentator from whom I would rather receive praise—and rebukes—than Philip Jenkins. I am therefore very glad that, in his review ("A Week of Thursdays," February) he found readable my book *The Unsleeping Eye*, which, of course, was written well before I (or anyone else) could benefit from his own book *Images of Terror*. His evocation of Chesterton, in particular, is a point exceptionally well made.

Certainly a congenital believer, like myself, in Original Sin would not purport to be "the deepest-dyed libertarian," so I hope I can reassure Dr. Jenkins on that score. My own convictions, for what they may be worth, are: First, Al Qaeda or no Al Qaeda, we are probably stuck with secret policing for as long as we have recognizably discrete nation-states, and maybe longer. Second, America was lucky to have J. Edgar Hoover around for so long, whatever regrettable abuses he committed at times, notably when his powers of judgment declined during his old age. And third, had the FBI not been comprehensively demoralized in the quarter-century after Hoover's death—not only by nurturing the poisonous likes of Robert Hanssen—the catastrophe of September 11 either would not have occurred at all or would have been far less appalling in its effects.

—R.J. Stove
Melbourne, Australia

Dr. Jenkins Replies:

I sincerely apologize if I misrepresented Mr. Stove's point of view. May I take this second chance to praise his excellent and thoughtful book?

On Modern Evangelicalism

Having read Aaron D. Wolf's piece on the late Carl F.H. Henry (*Cultural Revolutions*, February), I wonder: Isn't it self-evident that, if a Christian remains separated amidst an increasingly depraved culture, he eventually becomes "extremely separated"? You call it fundamentalism; I call it biblical. When Paul reasoned with the philosophers in Athens, he did not intellectualize the Word of God.

I agree with *Chronicles*' assessment of our culture. I disagree, however, with the neo-evangelicals' proposed "engagement" of it. Intellectually defending Christianity does not accomplish much of anything. We see where it has led—to such plain, outright worldliness in the Church that it is hard to tell the Christians from the pagans.

The purpose of the Church is not to guard against apostasy nor to foster unity but to advance the spiritual growth of the saints (see Ephesians 4). The reason She has failed in the first two is that She has failed in the third. Intellectualizing has exacerbated the problem.

The problem is, and always has been, sin. If the heathen don't get it about sin, they won't get it if you intellectualize the Word of God, either.

I agree with Dr. Henry that many theologians need to be evangelized; most are unbelievers. Unfortunately, those who do not need saving need pastoring. I recommend that these "neo-evangelicals" perform the complex calculation of addition by subtraction: They should stop reading their own stupid and vainglorious treatises in order that they might actually understand the Word of God.

—Gary Manske
Deep River, IA

Mr. Wolf Replies:

Mr. Manske makes several good points, and his criticism that evangelicalism has failed to "engage" the (dying) culture is writ large on the "stages" of its megachurches every Sunday morning (or Saturday night). A healthy degree of separation, for which fundamentalism continues to stand, was key to the survival of the broad evangelical movement as well as that of ethnic Catholics, Scottish Presbyterians, and German Lutherans.

Part of the Church's mission to build up the Bride of Christ involves taking the Gospel to unbelievers, however, and there is the rub. In the late 1940's, Dr. Henry and his colleagues were right to assert that fundamentalism was so intensely focused on standards of moral purity that it didn't take into account that those who are yet to be evangelized are still enslaved to sin. Unfortunately, they also advocated a leftist agenda in response to the problems of race, poverty, and "the liquor traffic" that, instead of winning an audience for the Gospel, only fostered sympathy for the Social Gospel, a confusion of the Kingdoms, and a thirst for centralized government among their heirs.

On the Cover

Regarding the novel photographic cover of your February issue: It is highly ugly. Boo! Hiss! I hope you return to original art in the future.

—Mark Kennedy
New Orleans, LA

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by William R. Hawkins

Presidential Campaign Should Change the Trade Debate

While the antiwar rhetoric that fueled the early days of the Democratic presidential primaries has not gone away, attacks on President Bush's dismal record of net job losses have now taken precedence.

Unfortunately, Rep. Dick Gephardt, the first to drop out of the race, was the only Democratic candidate with a record of opposing the "free trade" ideology, which is most responsible for the loss of 2.7 million manufacturing jobs in the United States and 300,000 "outsourced" service jobs since the 1997 global financial crisis. Frontrunner John Kerry, however, has voted for every bad trade agreement of the last decade, including NAFTA (1993), the creation of the WTO (1994), establishing permanent normal trade relations (PNTR) with China (2000), and the granting of "fast track" negotiating authority to President Bush (2002).

North Carolina Sen. John Edwards was better positioned to take on trade policy, since imports and the movement of factories overseas have devastated the southeastern states as much as they have the Midwest. Edwards, however, had also backed open trade with China and "fast track" for Bush.

Both Edwards and Kerry supported the alternative to the Foreign Sales Corporation (FSC) tax break for exporters offered by Reps. Phil Crane (R-IL) and Charles Rangel (D-NY), which would have given a ten-percent tax break to domestic manufacturing. Neither candidate, however, offered any rebuke to the WTO for declaring America's duly enacted FSC legislation "illegal" or to the European Union for imposing sanctions on American exports under WTO auspices.

Both Kerry and Edwards have criticized China's currency manipulation and failure to keep promises she made before the PNTR vote to open her market. However, as of this writing, neither is a cosponsor of S. 1586, a bill that would impose countervailing duties on Chinese goods to offset Beijing's undervalued currency. S. 1586 has a dozen cosponsors, including Sens. Elizabeth Dole (R-NC) and Hillary Clinton (D-NY), which makes it the first major initiative that has garnered bipartisan mainstream support for the levying of tariffs.

Kerry has claimed that he "will fight to restore the jobs lost under Bush in the first 500 days of his administration." He proposes to create jobs by offering a new manufacturing-jobs credit, investing in new energy-efficient industries, increasing research and development, giving tax incentives to help industries upgrade, and training workers for new opportunities. One of his more interesting ideas is to encourage students in high-tech fields to work in manufacturing by repaying a portion of their student loans. He would also reduce the costs of health insurance and pensions to employers, which are financial barriers to adding full-time positions.

Kerry's program is clearly not enough to counteract the massive advantages that firms receive in other countries from poverty-level wages, lax safety and environmental regulations, government subsidies, and protected home markets. However, his emphasis on making U.S.-based firms more competitive opens the door to a fundamental shift in the terms of the debate. Though billed as an effort to put American firms on a "level playing field," its success depends on giving such firms an advantage. Only then can they win the trade battle and keep (even bring back) production capacity and commercial jobs. It is decidedly not "free trade" with its trust in the not-so-invisible hand of corporate planners and indifference to the "market" outcomes they contrive.

The Bush administration has shown signs that it, too, understands the difference. The negative reaction to Bush economic advisor Gregory Mankiw's claim that the outsourcing of jobs is just another aspect of "free trade" that has to be accepted seems to have set off alarm bells in the White House. A passive attitude on trade makes the President look weak and uncaring—attributes that defeated his father in 1992.

About a third of the voters in the Super Tuesday states said that the economy and jobs were the top issues in the election, far outpacing healthcare, taxes, and the war in Iraq. According to exit polls conducted for the Associated Press, about six in ten voters said they believed foreign trade was likely to take jobs away from their states, compared with only two in ten who said that trade would add jobs. These opinions were remarkably similar across the country, with 72 percent in Ohio, 60 percent in Connecticut, and 65 percent in Georgia saying trade costs jobs.

Secretary of Commerce Don Evans has been touting the administration's plan to revive U.S. manufacturing by making it more competitive. Though he refers to the "level playing field" too often, he does express some concern for countering "unfair" foreign practices. Yet, unless some tangible progress is made, the administration is in big trouble. "Fair trade"—or "free trade"—is not enough to guarantee results. What is needed is *advantageous trade*.

In January, the Commerce Department issued its "comprehensive strategy to address the challenges to U.S. manufacturing." The plan included many of the same themes Kerry has been using: reducing the burdens placed on American firms by regulations, litigation, taxes, healthcare, and expensive energy while promoting innovation, protecting intellectual-property rights, and increasing the role of government in research and development. The plan also called for a new assistant secretary of commerce for manufacturing and services, a President's Manufacturing Council, and an Office of Industry Analysis, which could form the core of a strategic economic general staff for the international commercial battle.

The Clinton administration once proposed such a role for the National Economic Council but failed to follow through. The result has been a tripling of the trade deficit since 1997 and the loss of American jobs in fields targeted by foreign rivals.

Transnational corporations and foreign interests will lobby hard to prevent any policy changes that would curtail their further expansion into U.S. markets. In an election year, however, the American people have a chance to trump them at the polls. The most affluent and accessible market for U.S. industry is at home, where $1.3 trillion is annually lost to overseas production. Public pressure could force Bush and Kerry to bid up what they would do to give a home-field advantage to American firms and workers. Such a contest would make this the most important election in a generation. c

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CIVIL UNIONS, which offer same-sex couples the privileges that presently accrue to those who have been united in normal marriages, have been discussed by several legislators since the Massachusetts Supreme Judiciary Court ordered the state legislature to establish "homosexual marriage." The Massachusetts high court, under the dynamic (demonic?) leadership of Chief Justice Margaret Marshall, decreed that such a halfway covenant is totally incompatible with its understanding of the state constitution. Civil unions would relegate homosexuals to the category of second-class citizens. According to the court, opposition could result only from "residual personal prejudices," such as those that have so often been held against other marginalized groups. If anyone says, "But the Bible forbids this," the answer would certainly be: "Believing the Bible is a residual personal prejudice."

In decreeing that civil unions are no substitute for real marriage, Justice Marshall and her court have done us a favor. The temptation, already expressed by a number of "conservative" writers—including some who favor a constitutional amendment—to compromise by creating civil unions, granting homosexual couples the financial and other benefits they desire but protecting the word *marriage*, is simply a way, shall we say, to praise by faint damns homosexual behavior. Such a "compromise" would fail like so many others of the past, for it would only delay what it is intended to hinder—the institution of homosexual and other extrabiblical and unnatural varieties of marriage.

The proposed compromise in effect grants legitimacy to homosexual unions and the practices associated with them. Although it is important to protect the word *marriage*, it is equally important to remember that to legitimize the proposed unions, by whatever euphemism we may use, is to spurn the entire Christian tradition and natural law. Ever since men first began to listen to the Word of God or to think rationally about nature, homosexuality has been considered to be *contra naturam* and never, even in pagan antiquity, has it been deemed an acceptable "alternative lifestyle."

"Civil unions" are no acceptable substitute for marriage. The reasons Judge Marshall gives for her own decision and for her understanding of the motives of those who oppose it involve a total repudiation of every kind of human covenant and community. She bases her understanding of the "right" to "gay marriage" on a principle of absolute individualism, as did the U.S. Supreme Court in *Planned Parenthood* v. *Casey*, when it accorded to each person the right to decide for herself the meaning of life. Naturally, those who oppose homosexual marriage can do so only because of "residual personal prejudices"—in other words, because of their personal beliefs. However, are not Mrs. Marshall's own conviction of the equality of all forms of sexual expression and her rejection of the Bible and natural law also examples of residual personal prejudice?

The Bible, the Jewish and Christian moral traditions, and even Islam look on homosexual behavior as abominable. Even pagan Greece, where homosexual conduct was, at times, romanticized, never accepted the "marriage" of two men. Where pederasty occurred in an educational situation, it was assumed that it was a limited phase and that marriage and children should follow. The awareness of natural law was too strong to allow it to be brushed aside and replaced by an unnatural way of life. On the other hand, both "gay marriage" and "civil unions" effectively place unnatural sexual relations on the same level as those that are natural and cause right and wrong to be determined by personal preference, immune to any general principles of morality.

In any form, a Defense of Marriage Amendment to the U.S. Constitution is hardly likely to remedy the moral and social collapse that is under way. Passing a new amendment will be an arduous and drawn-out task. In 30 years of hard work, in which I took part, the right-to-life movement has essentially made zero progress in this regard. And any value that an amendment fight might have for the moral climate of the nation is already attenuated by efforts to compromise in order to make the amendment less objectionable to homosexuals. The plan of action that commends itself as both morally honest and, perhaps, rhetorically effective would be to answer the question from the marriage service of the Book of Common Prayer: "I now charge you, as ye shall answer on the great and dreadful day of judgment, if ye know any reason why these two may not be lawfully joined in marriage, ye do now declare it." The reason is that God says "No!" and nature silently concurs. As the late Dr. Jerome Lejeune said in answering the question of whether AIDS represented a divine judgment of homosexual behavior: "Only God truly forgives, man sometimes forgives, nature never forgives."

—*Harold O.J. Brown*

THE SIERRA CLUB'S reactivation of its eight-year intra- and extra-mural war over its policy concerning immigration is the latest exhibit opening at the Great American Madhouse. In 1996, the club officially announced itself neutral on the subject of immigration *and* population control. Two years later, a faction proposed a measure advocating immigration restriction in behalf of protecting the North American environment. The measure was defeated by 60 percent of the voting members, but the anti-immigration minority has remained determined to prevail ever since.

This year, with the club's spring elections looming, they are back. Controlling 20 percent of the 15 seats on the board of directors, the insurgents hope to extend their influence even further by electing a slate of restrictionist candidates including Colorado governor emeritus Richard Lamm; Frank Morris, a former director of the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation; and an entomology professor at Cornell, David Pimentel. A gain of three seats, they say, would enable them to set policy for the organization. This time around, the insurrection is complicated by the restrictionists' alliance with a group of animal-rights activists who want the club to make a stand against hunting, fishing, and eating meat; one of their leaders, Paul Watson (the cofounder of Greenpeace and head of the Sea Shepherd Conservation Society, whose specialty is ramming whaling ships), already serves on the board. This untoward complication has not prevented the dreaded "R" word from being raised, despite Executive Director Carl Pope's magnanimous concession that the oppositionist candidates are probably not racists. "But they are clearly supported by racists," he added. That was enough for Morris Dees of

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the Southern Poverty Law Center, who immediately mailed in his membership fee along with notice of intention to stand for board member himself. "I'm running to sound the alarm of an attempt to take over this organization by the radical element of anti-immigration people," Dees explained. "They are interested in keeping this country white."

The Sierra Club, which has 750,000 members and an annual budget of $100 million, is best known for its failure to save Hetch Hetchy Valley near Yosemite and Glen Canyon on the Colorado River (which lies today beneath the stagnant waters of "Lake Foul," as Edward Abbey called it). Operated nowadays by cosmopolitan marketing types more adept at selling T-shirts and attracting donations from other progressive (*i.e.*, pro-immigration) organizations than at building a campfire without a match, reading a topo map, or carrying an 80-pound pack, the club has long since abandoned the legacy of John Muir and Theodore Roosevelt. According to Mr. Pope, Sierra's "dominant perspective has been to protect nature for people." (Is that so? San Francisco needed a water supply, but Muir started a club "to make the mountains glad.") "But by pulling up the gangplank on immigration," Pope continues, "they are tapping into a strand of misanthropy that says human beings are a problem." Paradoxically, this is a form of misanthropic thinking that Carl Pope seems himself to share. "Birth control—not border patrols—is the common sense solution to overpopulation," he explained four years ago. If we can all just sit down and add up how many immigrants are coming into the country each year and calculate from that figure how many babies native-born Americans should be allowed to have in terms of maintaining an environmentally friendly human population, we will have solved our big problem in a rational and humane way.

Adam Werbach, the club's president from 1996 to 1998, deplores what he calls "a sad attempt by a very small special-interest group to take over the entire Sierra Club organization." Nonsense, Paul Watson counters. "It's a democratic process. To accuse these candidates of taking over the Sierra Club is like accusing the Democrats of taking over the White House." To combat revolution from below, Pope and the Sierra Club's president, Larry Fahn, hatched the idea of a one-page notice, to be mailed with every ballot, warning of "an unprecedented level of outside involvement" and urging members to vote for those candidates "endorsed by club leaders whom you trust." To prevent this attempt at influencing the election, Lamm, Morris, and Pimentel filed suit in San Francisco Superior Court against the Sierra Club—on the same day that Sierra sued the City of San Diego to stop construction by the federal government of a fence along the U.S.-Mexican border. (The fence, the Sierra Club complains, would siltate a federally protected estuary in the vicinity.)

A takeover of the board of the Sierra Club by anti-immigration directors would be a welcome development, of course. It is not easy to see, however, what that could accomplish in the long run. On the one hand, organized environmentalism's refusal to recognize the contradiction between saving North America from people and continuing to import more people to North America from abroad is one of the foremost obstacles to environmental preservation today. On the other, it represents, as almost no other such contradiction does, the futility and self-destructiveness of the liberal ideology. Adding the Sierra Club to the restrictionist ranks might—conceivably—educate and embolden (some) other environmentalist groups to endorse the anti-immigration cause, thus contributing a potent special-interest lobby to the restrictionist coalition. Unless the entire environmentalist movement, or almost the entirety of it, can be mobilized for that purpose, however, the likelihood that the systemic irrationality (of which America's insane immigration policy amounts to Exhibit A) can be rationalized is slim indeed.

—*Chilton Williamson, Jr.*

VLADIMIR PUTIN's surprise firing of the Russian government on February 24 and his appointment of "technocratic" Prime Minister Mikhail Fradkov on March 1 had Western officials and observers buzzing about another round of "reform" and Russian cooperation with the West, while Western investors were optimistic that the new government would favor them. Nevertheless, Washington should approach its relations with Moscow with a clear idea of what is likely happening behind the high Kremlin walls—and with no illusions about its present occupants.

Many Western observers saw Putin's unexpected dismissal of the government, headed by Prime Minister Mikhail Kasyanov, just 19 days before the March 14 presidential election, as a bold step intended to accelerate reforms that would favor foreign investment and improve Russia's relations with the West. The English-language *Moscow Times*, which serves Moscow's expatriates, took a quick survey of resident Westerners and found they were "cheering" the "surprise nominee" who would supposedly "unquestioningly follow Putin's orders to push forward reforms." Putin himself claimed Fradkov would advance restructuring of the government and fight corruption, while E.U. spokesman Reijo Kemppinen stated that the appointment of Russia's current envoy to the European Union "is a positive signal of the importance that Russia attaches to its relations with the European Union." Meanwhile, William Browder, director of Hermitage Capital Management, which manages $1.3 billion in investments in Russian securities, praised the Russian president's stated policy goals, seeing Fradkov as a Putin loyalist who would push hard for economic reforms.

But who is Fradkov, and why was he appointed?

Fradkov appears to be a political survivor with ties to several Kremlin "clans," leading most Russian analysts to see him as a compromise figure—hardly a convincing corruption fighter. Fradkov was likely a KGB recruit in the Soviet era when he worked for Soviet foreign-trade missions, which were commonly used as covers for intelligence operations. In the "wild 90's" under Boris Yeltsin, Fradkov served as deputy foreign-trade minister, "handing out lucrative export quotas and privatizing key export agencies in the crony free-for-all grab" that was then underway, as the *Moscow Times* (March 2) put it, and, as Russian sources have claimed, serving as a government placeman for the Alfa Group, a vast financial-industrial conglomerate reportedly linked to organized crime, including drug trafficking. Fradkov was also involved in a scandal regarding misappropriation of budget funds—and reportedly built himself a Moscow residence with the cash. Twice foreign-trade minister and a former deputy secretary of the Russian Security Council, Fradkov later headed the now-disbanded Tax Police before being named Russia's envoy to the European Union last year. Thus, Fradkov not only served the Yeltsin clan and developed a close relationship with Alfa "oligarch"

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Pyotr Aven but cultivated ties to the "St. Petersburg *siloviky*," veterans of the KGB and the FSB (a KGB successor organization) with close personal ties to Putin.

The decision to fire the government so unexpectedly, the surprise appointment of Fradkov—who was not on any Kremlin-watcher's short list of candidates for prime minister—and the nearly weeklong pause before a new government head was announced suggest fierce infighting among the Kremlin clans—and, possibly, that the president is having difficulty containing the factional battle. Moscow political analyst Lilia Shevtsova asserted that Putin's appointment of Fradkov shows the Russian president is "losing his grip": "This means that Kasyanov's dismissal wasn't planned. There was no plan at all." The chaotic events were, in Shevtsova's view, "proof of disorientation, disintegration and compromise." "This confirms that there is some kind of serious conflict" in the Kremlin, according to Kremlinologist Andrey Piontkovsky, with Fradkov, "tainted all over with corruption," being an unlikely compromise figure. Piontkovsky called the appointment a "totally irresponsible decision." Fradkov's primary qualification may have been that the Kremlin had plenty of *kompromat* ("compromising material") on the veteran bureaucrat, ensuring his loyalty: "There is no less dirt on him than . . . on Kasyanov," reported *Novaya Gazeta* columnist Yuliya Latynina.

So what does the chaotic Kremlin situation mean for the West, especially the United States? U.S. investors should be cautious in their dealings with Russia: Yes, the country is rich in natural resources, especially oil, and could be an alternative (to OPEC) source of "black gold" for America, but the risks are high, and any deals should be approached with a keen awareness of the nature of the "oligarchic" system and its workings. The same rule can be applied to Washington's relations with Moscow: Russia can be a strategic partner in, for example, the "War on Terror," but President Bush should avoid any urge he might have to personalize relations with Putin or members of his entourage. Any agreements with Moscow should be accompanied by adequate safeguards to prevent U.S. budget funds from entering the Swiss bank accounts of Russian bigwigs. The White House can expect little in the way of cooperation in fighting international organized crime from the Kremlin; and the administration should be aware that Putin may not have as a firm a grip on power as most Western talking heads seem to think. There are no guarantees he can follow through on any arrangements he makes with Washington.

—*Wayne Allensworth*

OBITER DICTA: Mark your calendar now for the 15th Annual Meeting of the **John Randolph Club,** November 12-13, 2004. Join your favorite *Chronicles* editors in San Antonio at the Historic Menger Hotel across the plaza from the Alamo and one block from the Pasa del Rio. Toast the JRC's 15th anniversary in the famous bar at the Menger where Teddy Roosevelt recruited his Rough Riders. Watch *Chronicles* and *ChroniclesMagazine.org* for more information.

After a brief productive time at *Chronicles*, our editorial assistant **Matthew Rarey** has moved on. We wish him all the best in his future endeavors.

Paul Lake, who teaches English and creative writing at Arkansas Tech, has contributed two poems to this issue. His second collection of poetry, *Walking Backward*, was released by Story Line Press. The author of *The Measured Word: Essays on Poetry and Science* (University of Georgia Press), Mr. Lake has published poems in the *Formalist*, the *Hudson Review*, the *Sewanee Review*, and the *Paris Review*, among others.

Our art is provided by our art director, **H. Ward Sterett** of Roscoe, Illinois. Mr. Sterett received his B.F.A. from the University of Colorado and his M.F.A. from Northern Illinois University, and he attended the L'Abri Fellowship, where he studied the effect of Christianity on art. He currently works as a sculptor, painter, and printmaker in Roscoe, of which he is village president.

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by Thomas Fleming

Tax Slavery

The American Revolution, as all Americans are taught, began as a rebellion against unfair taxation; in the United States today, however, some 230 years after James Otis protested the Stamp Act, unimaginably higher taxes are imposed on the American people and collected by means that would have seemed tyrannical to George III. Britain had no tax on income *per se*, and if government had proposed collecting taxes from income *before* that income was received—which is how the withholding tax operates—riots would have broken out. Still, the more loudly our political leaders and economic "experts" clamor for tax reform, the worse the system gets.

For all the thousands of hours of talk and millions of pages of reports and proposals, the government continues, with a few minor ups and downs, to increase its share of citizens' wealth and income, and—despite the promises of budget cuts, fiscal restraint, and tax reform—American taxpayers, decade by decade, are paying more money for more government. The exceptions are not worth mentioning because, in the long run, they are statistically meaningless.

Liberals trot out the familiar argument that people want services, but they do not like to pay for them. Setting aside the difficult question of what people may or may not actually want, let us look at those "services": a system of schools designed to retard intellectual growth and corrupt the morals of the students, a welfare system that rewards irresponsibility and produces poverty and crime; a system of common defense that encourages illegal aliens, some of them terrorists, to overrun the country, committing crimes up to and including the destruction of the World Trade Center. Northcote Parkinson, when asked what recommendation he would give the reform-minded Jimmy Carter, made one suggestion: Cut the federal budget across the board by ten percent every year until it is cut in half. Only then would it be time to look for further cuts of unnecessary or wasteful programs.

It was a good idea (so was Gramm-Rudman-Hollings), but, no matter what budget reform—whether of taxing or spending—is proposed or undertaken, the long-term result is always the same: Those who control the government have more of our money. They also have more of our power. There is a finite amount of power in any society, and the more we give to government, the less control we have over our own lives. In the old American system, most power was in the hands of individuals, families, communities, and private associations (colleges, unions, business corporations). Some was invested in local and state governments, and a tiny amount was allocated to the national government. In the pyramid of power, the people at the top of the pyramid had the least—as in a real pyramid.

Now, however, the pyramid is inverted, and government agencies school and regulate children; states dictate policies to cities and local school systems; and the federal government is doing its best to live up to Hobbes' term (by no means derogatory) *Leviathan*. I would prefer to call it *Godzilla*, a malevolent and destructive monster that inspires an almost religious reverence in the servile masses who run screaming through the streets. They know it will destroy them, but, in some dim way, they accept the righteousness of the monster's cause.

In the old America, we said, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it." In the new America, we "fix" everything that works (families, private schools, small farms and businesses) by breaking them, and the things that are truly broken—our fractured borders, our violence-torn cities, our expanding deficits—we treat with benevolent neglect. The one thing that never breaks, however, is government, because it is a machine, gone out of control, that grows by feeding on its victims.

My naive conservative friends continue to speak of fixing this or that inequity in the budget or of controlling spending. For the most part, their (mostly) well-intentioned schemes and projects are rooted in delusion. There are two primary reasons why government, as it exists today, cannot be fixed, and, until we address those root causes, there can be no hope for improvement. The first cause is the beast itself, the democratic political system; the second is more philosophical: the misguided attempt to find technical solutions to what are essentially moral problems.

As they have evolved, democratic political systems run on the money provided by the supporters of political candidates. Since the congressman's first and most important job is to get reelected, he begins his fundraising campaign even before he takes office. Whatever good intentions (and those are rare enough) might have propelled him into politics, he soon learns in Washington that his job consists of two parts: taking money from lobbyists, PAC's, and interested supporters and voting for the projects they endorse. Eventually, every politician worth his kickbacks comes to realize that his main reason for seeking and exercising power is to sell it to the highest bidder.

In a democracy, the system is aggravated in two ways. First, as a system gets bought and paid for by competing interest groups, it loses the ability to respond to crises or to reform itself. Congressional "gridlock," as economist Mancur Olson has brilliantly explained, is the direct result of democracy, and the longer a democratic system has been in place (as in Britain), the more corrupt and inefficient it is.

Second, corruption under oligarchies and monarchies, while it breeds inefficiency, is not always the foundation of the system, as it is in a democracy. A king has the power to clean house from time to time. Congressmen cannot clean house, because any real reform—budget cuts, tax cuts, federalist plans to transfer power back to the states—would ultimately have the effect of diminishing the congressman's utility to the lobbyists. Why would a Dick Gephardt or an Orrin Hatch surrender the control of government resources on which his personal power and wealth depend?

All schemes to reform government founder on this rock: They would have to be implemented by politicians. The practical reformer's dream is to raise enough money to buy off a congressional majority, but even if we could put our hands on all the money in the world, we would still face the deeper problem: the technical delusion. The technical delu-

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sion manifests itself in many ways in every part of our public conversation about social ills. Whatever the evil—poverty, drug abuse, illegitimacy, obesity, corruption of public officials, children falling off swing sets—there is a technical fix provided by a specialized discipline like political science, psychology, or economics. This is one of the reasons we no longer speak of evil, only of problems for which "they"—that is, the scientists, specialists, and politicians—will devise a solution.

The social sciences, on which Americans waste billions of dollars annually, are the product of this delusion. Can anyone tell me of a sociologist or psychologist or political "scientist" who has ever "fixed" or even improved anything, unless the fix was accidental or based on common sense? An economist might make an approximate guess about how 78 out of 100 human beings might act in a given situation, but he cannot predict how you or I will act. Good economists know this; the rest do not.

There are no *sciences* (in the limited sense in which physicists and chemists use the term) of human behavior or human society, and the delusion that there are leads to the further delusion that moral problems—such as gluttony, fornication, adultery, drunkenness, and greed—can be eliminated or fixed. The problem of high and unjust taxes is a moral one, not just in the limited sense in which Republicans complain that the Democrats' soak-the-rich policies are rooted in the sin of envy. They are right, of course, but there is a deeper problem, and it lies with the nature of taxation itself: the assumption that one set of people—those who rule the state—possess a preemptive right to the incomes and property of another set of people, the taxpayers we used to call citizens.

The Constitution of the United States contains a prohibition on all "capitation" that is not levied on the basis of a census—in other words, the Congress could not directly tax individuals except through the states and on a *per capita* basis. The old word for such taxation is *tribute*, an involuntary payment made to a superior or foreign power in acknowledgement of submission.

In the history of free peoples, such tribute is paid only in times of emergency. The citizens of Republican Rome were required to pay *tributum* only during wartime, and even then there was an expectation that the money would be paid back (which sometimes happened). What was and is important is the assumption that the citizens' money belongs to the citizens and not to the government. If a collective danger threatens, then no real citizen would withhold his contribution, and, once Hannibal was defeated and Italy in ruins, he would not complain if the loan was never repaid. Regular taxation of persons, however, was something imposed on Rome's imperial subjects, and, even under the empire, Italy enjoyed exemption from the tribute for a long time. When Romans in Italy were finally forced to pay the tribute, the concept of Roman citizenship had been rendered meaningless, and the empire was ruled by successful generals.

The Roman experience reminds us that a citizen's wealth and property belong to him and not to the government, which can only confiscate a free man's property in times of national emergency. To take a beach house and convert the land to a harbor fortification may well be justified, but eminent domain, when used as a means of enriching developers or providing space for a baseball stadium, is an unjust tax, inconsistent with republican liberty.

If a citizen's money belongs to him, then the withholding tax turns taxpayers into slaves. Even if the withholding system could be reversed, however, a national income tax could only be imposed for purposes that the vast majority of citizens agreed were vital and not merely useful or desirable: billions for defense but not one cent for education, "the arts," or the system of agricultural subsidies that have put small farmers out of business. Projects for wealth transfer, whether from rich to poor or white to black, are not merely unwise or unproductive: They are immoral by definition and contrary to the principles of a free society.

Champions of the Constitution all know the story that Davy Crockett told of the constituent who objected to Congress's appropriation of $20,000 for relief of the victims of a fire in Georgetown. The disgruntled taxpayer did not object to either the justice of the cause or the amount paid (although it is interesting to note that Congress would spend the nation's money on its own back yard).

There were basic issues at stake, argued the constituent. "The power of collecting and disbursing money at pleasure is the most dangerous power that can be intrusted to man . . . ," and, under the Constitution, "Congress has no right to give charity." What can be done for one can be done for all, and

> you are at liberty to give to any and everything which you may believe, or profess to believe, is a charity, and to any amount you may think proper. You will very easily perceive what a wide door this would open for fraud and corruption and favoritism, on the one hand, and for robbing the people on the other.

Crockett and his friend were not just simple men of the frontier: They were republicans, and, until we can persuade at least a few politicians of the simple moral fact that our money belongs to us, it is idle to hope that we can either reform our taxes or restore our liberties. c

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Intolerance: A Memo
by Paul Lake

Hate those who hate or be among the hated.
The truth grows clearer with each passing day:
Intolerance cannot be tolerated.

Don't think you're safe; no one's inoculated.
Hate means whatever public voices say;
Inflaming first the hater, then the hated,

It spreads whenever ideas are debated
That might cause some discomfort or dismay.
Intolerance cannot be tolerated.

So here's a list of things you've advocated
Now and again which might lead some astray.
Hate them or find yourself among the hated

Who think intolerance can be abated
By honesty, equality, fair play.
Intolerance cannot be tolerated,

A thought so true, it can't be overstated,
Or brook deliberation or delay.
Hate those who hate or be among the hated.
Intolerance cannot be tolerated.

Redcoats
by Paul Lake

Like redcoats ranked in regimental lines,
We march in perfect time up the long hill,
Numb to the crack of sniper fire till
A random shot strikes down the brave companion
Marching beside us, leaving a gaping hole
For thought to trouble like an anxious tongue.

Then row on row of distant muskets fire,
Chopping us down like hail assaulting wheat.
Our lines quick-step in double-time as guns
Rake through our ranks like ten pins, leaving each
To face a firestorm of shot and smoke
Disarmed and faltering . . . one at a time,
Brought down by cancer, coronary, stroke.
Then all is silence. No man breaks that line.

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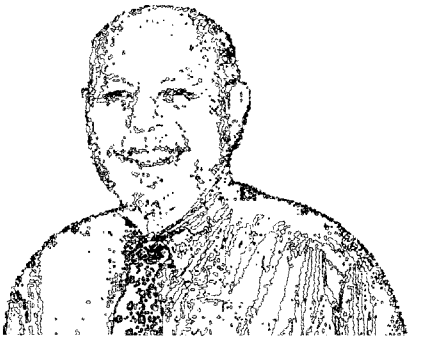
by Paul Gottfried

Inhuman Rights



Since the father of the French (and, by now, European) New Right, Alain de Benoist, sent me an inscribed copy of his most recent book, *Au-Delà des Droits De L'Homme* (Krisis, 2004), I read the text attentively. Like him, I have wondered why natural rights (now called *human rights*) have become, in the words of Régis Debray, "the last to date of our civil religions, the soul of a world without a soul." Benoist has no trouble finding a swarm of self-styled consciences of humanity, from Elie Wiesel to papal spokesmen, who assure us that "human rights" represent a divine revelation and a religious mystery. One author, Marcel Gauchet, who speaks of *le sacre des droits de l'homme*, may be on to something when he stresses the ritualistic nature of human-rights talk. As Benoist properly observes, one can contextualize the phenomenon historically and sociologically, but it is hard to demonstrate that the abstract universals he analyzes are something more than a time-bound fiction. Until about 20 years ago, despite the United Nations' periodic enumerations of human rights, perceptive contemporary thinkers (including Alasdair MacIntyre, Hannah Arendt, and Raymond Aron) would have agreed with Edmund Burke, David Hume, Joseph de Maistre, and the German Historical School that natural and human rights are the inventions of misguided moralists.

Benoist outlines with concision how the current cult got started. After looking at the piecemeal construction of a "state of nature" reference point in the 16th and 17th centuries, Benoist turns to Locke as the progenitor of the full-blown figment of people living as individuals outside of civil society before consenting to become part of a voluntary community. Benoist departs from a general conservative criticism of this view by stressing the moral impulse behind it. This, he insists, may be as essential for the theory as its justification of a life full of individual material gratification. By presenting society as an artificial construct devised for the use of essentially asocial individuals, natural-rights advocates assign their own ethical end to political life, the self-actualization of individuals as equal bearers of the same right to physical satisfaction. Note that neither accomplishment nor differential worth has anything to do with this equally distributed claim. Although Benoist also introduces the interpretation of individual rights put forth by Kant, which stresses human dignity, he suggests that this variation has not been as important as the mainstream natural-rights view, which emphasizes entitlement. The Kantian view is a morally ascetic one, centered on a rational will that commands respect because it requires the fulfillment of duty. Needless to say, such a position is not likely to capture the imagination of a consumerist society composed of pleasure-seeking individuals.

Benoist is much more convincing in showing how this theory has become sacralized in the late 20th century than he is in tracing its development in the early-modern period. What Benoist ignores is that, for centuries, Europeans believed in the Bible and in Christian theology yet, for the most part, held recognizably classical views about society and the social nature of man. While the Protestant Reformation, to some extent, moved away from a Christian Aristotelian perspective, it continued, except at its fringes, to uphold a hierarchical, organic understanding of social life. Although both Jesuit and Calvinist political writers in the late 16th century began to experiment with a "state of nature" concept, neither believed this was more than a device for placing limits on absolute monarchies. In contrast to the monarch's pretensions to be the father of his family of subjects, theologians started to treat his relation as being contingent on the recognition of certain (no longer customary) rights. Such a search for a grounding for a political theory that would limit power, however, was not the same as denying the corporate nature of people. It was only with the Lockean revolution that the real march toward hedonistic individualism began.

Benoist is particularly acute in clarifying the convergence of circumstances in Europe and America that has caused this to happen. He leaves no doubt that those who argue for human rights are modern religious fanatics. The "universal rights" they worship have nothing to do with the social or moral practices of most of mankind and operate exclusively in a late-modern Western culture and those societies that have fallen under its influence. Equally significant, the laundry list of rights is continually modified. According to President Bush and the National Endowment for Democracy, universal rights now include feminist self-actualization, a concept that would have mystified those French Revolutionaries who, in 1789, affirmed the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of Citizens. The new declaration drawn up by the United Nations in 1974 treats property as a right only indirectly, although it is a paramount right in the U.N. declaration of 1948. How can a doctrine be sacred whose content keeps changing?

The answer Benoist provides is that the doctrine's content is relative to an expanding empire and global economy. Were it not for an American imperialist presence and the breakdown of traditional societies abroad, human rights would not be in such vogue. Put differently, an expansionist American power can determine the contents of a chimera that has acquired the character of a post-Christian religion.

I offer one slight caveat on Benoist's otherwise convincing brief. It is questionable whether the defenses Third World intellectuals offer for their exotic practices (such as female circumcision) have to be accorded the respectability Benoist lavishes on them. We can frown on these practices without believing that the United States has a duty to invade and reeducate societies that engage in them.

Today, we not only export the inalienable right to property or religious tolerance but push feminist and homosexual causes as "human rights," and we may soon have other goodies to shove in the faces of foreign populations. c

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Revolting Taxation

How Federal Taxation Usurped Federalism

by David Hartman

On April 15, U.S. taxpayers will pay the last installment on their duty to government for 2003. The bill for federal, state, and local government totaled a staggering $3.3 trillion, of which one out of every seven dollars was in the form of "buy now, pay later" deficits, principally the federal one.

Federal spending accounted for two thirds of the tax bill, nearly all of which was levied on incomes in the form of personal, corporate, and social-insurance income taxes. The remaining third, funding state and local spending, was raised primarily by indirect property and sales taxes, plus fees.

It is difficult to put this scale of government in perspective, since Gross National Product (GNP) accounting obfuscates both the size and the proportion of government spending. Using National Income, government takes $38 out of every $100 of income. Even this is misleading, however, because income thus defined includes unproductive transfer payments for welfare and social insurance. Corrected for this, government consumes $45 out of every $100 of productive national income.

The average working family pays through government confiscation the equivalent of the income it retains, as if supporting an additional indolent family. Such submission to government confiscation can only be properly described as serfdom.

How did a country founded on a tax revolt and constituted on the premise of strictly limited central government degenerate to such a state of affairs? Originally, our government was dedicated to preserving freedom, responsibility, and property, while leaving the provision of welfare to families and communities. That government was replaced by a socialist one dedicated to philanthropic tyranny. Worse still, its mode of confiscation became intrusive direct taxation of individual incomes—a practice considered fit only for slaves and subject peoples since the days of early Greek civilization.

The road out of this swamp requires understanding how our government deviated from its foundations. The tax revolt that launched the revolution of the 13 colonies was the result not so much of the *level* of taxation as of the *manner* in which the taxes were levied and collected. Taxation without representation, exemplified by the Stamp Tax, was the catalyst, as opposed to tariffs (the outburst at the Boston Tea Party notwithstanding). Of equal or worse provocation was the high-handed and arbitrary method of enforcement employed by the British.

One of the principal reasons for replacing the Articles of Confederation with the Constitution of 1789 was an agreement on the rights of the federal government to levy taxes. The constitutional deliberations on taxation demonstrate how determined our forebears were to make government their servant—the opposite of the historical norm. Alexander Hamilton describes the nature of the taxation that is suitable for the new republic in Federalist 12 and 22, in which indirect taxes on consumption, in the form of tariffs and excises, are proposed for financing the federal government. Hamilton anticipates the "Laffer Curve" in observing that consumption taxes "contain in their own nature a security against excess. They prescribe their own limit which cannot be exceeded without the end proposed—that is, an extension of the revenue." Ironically, in Federalist 46, James Madison scoffs at concerns that the "welfare clause" in the introduction to the proposed Constitution linking taxes to the general welfare "amounts to an unlimited commission to exercise every power which may be alleged to be necessary for the common defense or general welfare." Time would show that he could not have been less prescient.

Before the Civil War, the U.S. government was financed by tariffs. During that period, rural states continually complained that they were being annexed to subsidize the protection of Northeastern industry through excessive tariffs; Charles Adams claims that, through the tariffs, the South paid three quarters of all federal taxes. Tariffs were reduced in 1846 and again in 1857, but they were raised once more in 1860 (precipitating the war). Nonetheless, before 1860, tariffs succeeded in paying for the entire operation of the federal government—plus the War of 1812, the Mexican War, the Louisiana Purchase, the purchase of Florida, and the Gadsden Purchase of New Mexico and Arizona.

The onset of the Civil War caused the escalation of expenditures beyond the federal government's ability to fund the war through borrowing and the issuing of "greenbacks." The solution adopted by Lincoln's Republican Party was the unconstitutional federal taxation of personal incomes, corporate income, and inheritances, in addition to excises on manufactures, alcohol, and tobacco and the creation of the Internal Revenue Service in 1863. The personal income tax commenced at a top rate of five percent, which was increased to ten percent by the Tax Act of 1864. Total federal taxation rose from a pre-war two percent of National Income to an average of 15 percent during the Civil War.

These income taxes were discontinued in 1872, along with the bulk of excises on manufactures, but the "sin taxes" have continued until the present. During the Civil War and Reconstruction, income taxes never quite reached half of tax collections, but, just as the experience of England and France during the Napoleonic Wars had shown, income-tax collection had proved to be an awesome source of financing the growth and power of a centralized national government.

Over the course of Ulysses S. Grant's two terms as President, the federal government and its revenues receded; as of 1876, federal revenues were less than five percent of GNP. This restraint continued until 1897; federal revenues were less than 2.5

David Hartman, a retired banker, is the chairman of the board of directors of The Rockford Institute.

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percent of GNP on the eve of the Spanish-American War and were still sufficiently derived from tariffs and "sin taxes."

Various populist efforts to reinstate income taxes in order to reduce tariffs drew little support until the Panic of 1893. Tariff revenues seriously declined at the same time that populists were clamoring for tariff reductions. In 1894, William Jennings Bryan succeeded in securing congressional passage of a two-percent tax on incomes of $4,000 or more, but this tax was declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court in 1895.

In 1898, the United States declared war on Spain under Republican President William McKinley, launching the phenomenal growth of the federal government and the military that would accelerate throughout the 20th century. The war also launched the political career of Theodore Roosevelt, who, as President from 1900 to 1908, expanded both the Navy and the regulatory functions of government. Responding to the pressure for tariff relief in 1908, both William H. Taft, the Republican candidate for president, and Teddy Roosevelt, now the (quasi-Republican) Bull Moose Party candidate, backed the income tax.

The same arguments made during the Civil War—progressive income taxation as "social equity" for reining in wartime profits and meeting extraordinary financial demands during a national emergency—were now being used by Progressives as the prescription for "economic equity" for the country.

Over the course of the 19th century, American intellectuals traded the goals of the American Revolution for those of the French Revolution. Though the American way had provided unrivaled material success for all Americans—U.S. laborers were the highest paid in the world—the socialists claimed that they could provide an even better Utopia. Progressive taxation and government regulation would share the wealth and end depressions.

In *Crisis and Leviathan*, his classic chronicle of the growth of the federal government in the 20th century, Robert Higgs describes how income taxation, the Progressives' beachhead for the adoption of the socialist agenda in the United States, was drafted in 1909 under the fumbling hands of the Republican and Democratic custodians of the Republic:

> The conservative Republicans led by Senator Nelson Aldrich attempted to compromise with the Republican Insurgents by joining in passing a corporate income tax and the Sixteenth Amendment. With the Amendment in hand the Insurgents joined by the Democrats passed the personal income tax as well, with graduated rates up to 7 percent.

During this furious legislative process, a maximum personal tax rate of ten percent was proposed for inclusion in the 16th Amendment but was withdrawn on the assurance that no one would ever entertain such a rate. Nonetheless, by 1918, just five years after the ratification of the amendment, the maximum personal rate reached 77 percent under President Woodrow Wilson. The corporate "excess profits tax" had raised the maximum corporate rate to 33 percent. Nonetheless, Wilson proposed a further doubling of tax revenues, which finally led to a conservative reaction and a temporary crest in the collectivist tide.

Shortly after the moderate Republican administration of President Warren G. Harding, who entered office in 1921, the economy sank into a serious recession, and the wartime inflation collapsed. Treasury Secretary Andrew Mellon headed off the efforts of conservative Republicans in Congress to replace income taxes with an indirect tax (in the form of a national sales tax) by proposing income-tax cuts. By 1925, the top personal income-tax rate dropped to 25 percent, and the corporate rate declined to 11 percent; the inheritance tax was reduced to 20 percent by 1928. The boom of the Roaring Twenties was largely a consequence of this tax relief.

Chicago Historical Society

By the end of the 1920's, excessive speculation and easy credit allowed by the Federal Reserve (reinstated in 1916 to prevent such excesses) caused a bubble that burst. The Fed overreacted and relentlessly drained the banking reserves, leading to a collapse of the banking system that turned the recession into a depression. The confiscatory taxation of President Franklin D. Roosevelt turned that into the Great Depression, which was ended only by the economic stimulus of last resort—World War II.

With the Depression widely proclaimed to be the result of the failure of capitalism, Roosevelt led the return to progressive taxation with a vengeance. In 1932, a top personal rate of 63 percent went into effect; as the economy finally started to stir in 1936, that rate was raised to 79 percent, and the economy relapsed once again. By the eve of World War II, the corporate income-tax rate had been raised to 79 percent; the inheritance-tax rate to a maximum of 52.5 percent.

To understand the total marginal effect of such rates on the inheritance of a dollar saved from a dividend, the *cumulative* effect must be tallied. In order to save a dollar and invest it, the taxpayer first has to pay personal income tax, then corporate tax on profit, then personal tax on the dividend, and, finally, inheritance tax; all told, to receive an inherited dividend of *one* dollar, *eleven* dollars of cumulative taxes must be paid.

During World War II, the personal income tax rose to a peak of 94 percent; the corporate income tax, to 40 percent. For the first time in U.S. history, middle-income citizens (not just the wealthy) became subject to the levies of the IRS. This caused a tax rebellion, which the IRS resolved by blackmail: Any taxpayer who would allow his income tax for 1943 to be withheld was forgiven his tax debt for 1942.

This level of taxation was perhaps understandable, given the state of total mobilization for a national emergency. Why, however, were personal income-tax rates left at wartime levels until 1963, and corporate rates until 1981? Now the war was against American taxpayers.

As the Mellon tax cuts in the 20's revealed, lowered tax rates

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lead to accelerated economic activity. Perversely, the confiscatory taxation of income—which, whether superimposed on personal or corporate income, is punishment for producing economic value—continues. The Kennedy tax cuts of the early 60's and the Reagan cuts of the 80's also stimulated investment, productivity, and output and led to a similar broad distribution of prosperity.

The Kennedy tax cuts still left income-tax rates at lofty levels, with the maximum personal rate at 70 percent, the corporate rate at 48 percent, and inheritance at 58 percent. The Reagan tax cuts reduced maximum income-tax rates to 28 percent for individuals and 34 percent for corporations but retained a 60-percent rate on inheritances—rates still high enough to yield only 19 cents after cumulative taxes on an inherited dollar of dividend derived from investment.

How did a country founded on a tax revolt and constituted on the premise of strictly limited central government degenerate to such a state of affairs? Ours was a limited government dedicated to preserving freedom, responsibility, and property.

A political tug-of-war on taxes has ensued since President Reagan's cuts. President George H.W. Bush raised the maximum personal income-tax rate to 31 percent; President Bill Clinton, to 39.6 percent. President George W. Bush only reduced the maximum personal tax rate to 35 percent, but he has sizably reduced the composite *marginal* maximum rate for corporate income by lowering the personal rate on dividends and capital gains to a flat 15 percent, which substantially reduces "double taxation."

The social-insurance taxes (FICA and Medicare) yield almost as much in federal revenue as the personal income tax does. Established by FDR, Social Security is a Ponzi scheme imported from European socialist democracies, which, instead of saving for the retirement of current taxpayers, uses current proceeds to pay the pensions of current retirees.

In 1937, taxpayers started paying for Social Security at a modest one percent of earned income matched by an additional one percent levied upon employers. Pensions commenced at the same time for workers who had never paid in a dime. Disability insurance was added in 1960; hospitalization insurance (the Medicare program of the Great Society), in 1970. The total contribution for federal social insurance is now 7.65 percent from both employee and employer (a total of 15.3 percent) on incomes up to $87,000; both employee and employer pay an additional 1.45 percent for Medicare (2.9 percent total) on all income over $87,000. Projections show that both programs will be insolvent at current rates of contribution and benefits within a decade, as the baby boomers retire.

The entire federal tax code is a legacy of the class warfare of the Progressive Era. Graduated income taxation has increased, despite lower maximum rates, since such innovations as the Alternative Minimum Tax, phaseouts of deductions and exemptions, and the Earned Income Tax credit (a subsidy for lower incomes) have been added. This has effected a significant *increase* over the past three decades in the share of income taxes paid by the top ten percent of incomes, which currently pay 65 percent of the personal income taxes collected by the IRS. The result has been a *decrease* in the after-tax-income share of the other 90 percent, through the reduction of saving for investment, which drives economic growth and prosperity. Redistribution intended to improve the well-being of lower-income Americans has worsened their status.

The socialist premise of confiscation is that the redistribution of wealth is necessary for social and economic justice. However, a study by Rector and Headerman of the Heritage Foundation shows that, while the U.S. Census Bureau estimates that the top quintile of U.S. incomes receives an average of 14 times the level that the bottom quintile receives, in reality, they receive only four times the level of the bottom quintile, after adjusting for workers per household, hours of work, fringe benefits, and transfer payments. The U.S. Treasury Office of Tax Analysis shows that six out of every seven Americans in the bottom quintile have moved to higher quintiles over the course of the subsequent ten years, and one out of seven have moved to the *top* quintile. The "economic injustice" that would justify the confiscatory progressive federal tax code is not evident. Furthermore, a 1997 Roper poll for *Reader's Digest* found that Americans, regardless of income, education, ethnicity, sex, or ideological and political classifications, agreed that 25 percent is the highest rate at which any income should be subjected to tax.

Americans pay a sorry price for their utopian income-tax system. Progressive taxation is inefficient, intrusive, and inequitable by any reasonable standard. It has fostered social engineering at the expense of married families and the creation of an underclass, driven our capital overseas, and all but destroyed our manufacturing sector. Ironically, the most productive nation in the world has become increasingly uncompetitive in world markets, while U.S. workers' wages continue a relative decline. As other nations increasingly favor the indirect taxation of commerce by value-added taxation—which is both border-adjustable and territorial—Americans cling to income taxation.

Continuing to play games with progressive tax rates (the recent Bush tax cuts are negated by increased federal spending) will not resolve the problem. Real federal tax reform requires more than lower income taxes. In fact, it requires the replacement of income taxes with some form of indirect tax on consumption, whether a value-added tax or a national sales tax (or both).

If the current tax system has any message to offer posterity, it is this: Taxing incomes is the means to everything revolting about government—namely, the unlimited power to confiscate, intrude upon, and regulate its subjects; to seek vainglory in foreign wars; and, ultimately, to destroy whatever stands in the way of those who govern. ◦c

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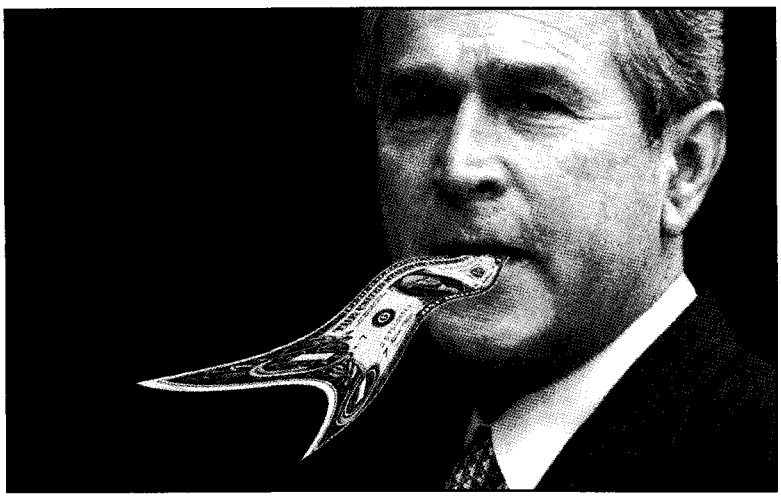
Tax-and-Spend Politics, Bush-style

Outgunning the Democrats

by Doug Bandow



H. Ward Sterett and Melanie Anderson

We can cut the deficit in half if Congress "is willing to make tough choices," says President George W. Bush. We are doomed.

Not that President Bush intends to make tough choices: His policy is borrow and borrow, spend and spend. When Bush took the oath of office, the Congressional Budget Office projected a cumulative surplus of $5.6 trillion from 2002 to 2011. The CBO now foresees a *deficit* of $2.9 trillion over the same period. Even when he was challenging Congress to "make tough choices," President Bush was proposing to spend more on the National Endowment for the Arts, pushing for passage of the bloated "No Lobbyist Left Behind" energy bill, urging approval of a $1.2 billion loan to renovate the U.N. headquarters, and planning to wait until after the election to advance a supplemental appropriation to fund the occupation of Afghanistan and Iraq.

Other than tax policy, President Bush's budget probably differs little from what would have been proposed by a President Al Gore. Politics, not principle, dominates. As budget analysts Veronique de Rugy and Tad DeHaven observe,

> Even the tax cuts, which happened to be good policy, were still political in nature considering their appeal to the Republicans' conservative base. At the same time, the politicos running the Bush reelection machine have consistently tried to placate or silence the liberals and special interests by throwing money at their every whim and desire.

Since even Republicans can borrow only so much, future tax hikes are likely, whether under a President John Kerry or under a reelected President Bush.

Conservatives once fought passionately to preserve the United States as a limited, constitutional republic. No longer. Many "conservative" Republicans now view themselves as the party of government. That means constant war and massive social engineering abroad and vast new social programs and regulatory regimes at home—though only in the promotion of conservative ends, of course.

Americans for Tax Reform figures that "Cost of Government Day" (COGD) in 2003 fell on July 11—the day when American taxpayers finally finished subsidizing government at all levels: taxes, budget deficits, and regulatory costs. Since 2000, COGD has advanced *17 days*. The increase in 2003 alone was five days. The jump under President George W. Bush is matched only by the rise under his father a decade before.

The principal reason is spending. Forget Bush's conservative rhetoric. Overall expenditures rose 7.9 percent in 2002 and 7.3 percent in 2003; the average from 1993 to 2001 was 3.4 percent. Over Bush's first three years, federal spending increased 2.5 times faster than national income. As a share of Gross Domestic Product, federal spending has gone from 18.6 to 20.5 percent. If outlays had matched national income, the deficit would be only $70 billion, compared with $477 billion last year.

So-called discretionary outlays, which are most easily controlled, are up 39 percent under the current Bush administration. Despite the growing clamor for fiscal restraint, they will rise nine percent this year. Adjusted for inflation, increases under Bush trail only those of Lyndon B. Johnson in the last 40 years. Real, nondefense discretionary outlays were up 23 percent during Bush's first three years. In contrast, during the

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first three years of the Clinton administration, domestic discretionary outlays increased just 2.4 percent annually.

Stephen Moore of the Club for Growth figures that "under President Bush inflation-adjusted domestic discretionary spending has grown faster than under any other president in 40 years." That is 8.2 percent in Bush's first three years, compared with 8.0 percent under Gerald Ford, 6.8 percent under Richard Nixon, and 4.3 percent under Johnson. At least Gerald Ford fought to cut spending, penning vetoes that were overridden. George W. Bush has signed everything that has reached his desk.

The true measure of government, however, is spending. And now everyone in Washington, Republicans and Democrats alike, is for bigger, more expansive, and more expensive government.

The administration blames the "War on Terrorism," but even that money was not always well used. Of outlays classified as homeland security, observed the *Washington Post*, much "is funding projects with questionable connections to homeland security." Cash went for a jobs program, for a fire boat, to purchase leather jackets, to assess land for redevelopment, and to underwrite janitorial services. Can anyone spell *pork*?

Even without Bush's large hikes in defense spending—34 percent between 2001 and 2003—America already had the largest military on earth. Alas, most U.S. deployments—in the Balkans, Japan, Korea—are expensive security black holes. Washington needs better intelligence, not bigger forces, to combat Al Qaeda.

Added to war around the globe are lengthy occupations and attempts at nation-building—international social engineering on a massive scale. Despite a half century of failure, the administration came up with the Millennium Challenge Account (MCA), a special foreign-aid fund administered outside of the Agency for International Development. Naturally, no other assistance programs were terminated.

The cost of the MCA is a pittance, however, compared with the escalating expense of our occupation of Iraq. The President demanded from a skeptical Congress $20.3 billion to lavish on a society that is ill-equipped to spend a fraction of that amount. He wanted money to buy garbage trucks, repair wetlands, and create postal ZIP codes; money to teach Iraqis about business and fund "women's leadership programs," whatever they are. He even included one million dollars for a museum to commemorate Saddam Hussein's crimes. How does this differ from a liberal Democrat's ideal foreign-aid program?

Moreover, the administration demanded that the entire amount be a *gift*, not a loan. The President even threatened to veto his own appropriations request if Congress failed to comply. On behalf of the administration whose war thoroughly destabilized the region and put America's troops at risk, OMB Director Joshua Bolten argued that "Including a loan mechanism slows efforts to stabilize the region and to relieve pressure on our troops."

Even if the aftermath of September 11 required substantial spending increases in some areas, that merely made it more imperative for the President and Congress to cut outlays elsewhere. Yet, says Brian Riedl of the Heritage Foundation, "over half of all new spending since 2001 is unrelated to defense and the 9/11 attacks." By last year, these outlays were up by 11 percent, "their fastest rate in nearly a decade." There has been an 85-percent increase in money for unemployment compensation, a 65-percent hike for education, a monstrous $180 billion in agricultural subsidies, expensive new foreign-aid programs, a huge visitors' center for Capitol Hill (the price of which has escalated from $71 million to more than half a billion dollars), and nearly $100 billion in proposed pork-barrel energy subsidies.

Of course, Democratic presidential candidates have offered a raft of new spending proposals, and Democratic legislators remain addicted to boundless federal outlays. Yet President Bush proposed even more expensive initiatives in his State of the Union Address—a Mars expedition, money for marriages, new education spending, more cash for the National Endowment for Democracy.

Republicans have proved more adept than Democrats at filling appropriations bills with wasteful, special-interest pork. The 2004 appropriations bills included an incredible 10,000 "earmarks"—five times the number just five years ago—in which Congress bypassed federal agencies in handing out grants. There is money for local museums, police athletic leagues, children's golf, a replica mule barn, libraries, children's sports programs, an indoor rain forest, roads, bike paths, colleges, and more. Rep. Jim Gibbons (R-NV) procured—I am not making this up—$225,000 to fix a swimming pool whose drain, he explained, he had clogged with tadpoles when he was ten years old.

Even more appalling, Republicans no longer fight for policies they advocated just a decade ago. For instance, President Bush is a fan of AmeriCorps, the Clinton program of paid "voluntarism" enacted over the opposition of the GOP. Even at a time of supposed budget stringency, the President wants a 15-percent increase in the National Endowment for the Arts, which should not be a function of the national government. The cost, though not the quality, of federal education programs continues to rise.

Facing rising criticism from within GOP ranks (obviously not all conservatives received the memo forbidding criticism of the President), the Bush White House has proclaimed its commitment to fiscal responsibility. President Bush told Tim Russert on *Meet the Press* that his fiscal critics simply were "wrong" in calling him "the biggest spender in American history." His administration now intends to cut the deficit—projected to run $521 billion next year—in half over the next five years. He failed to mention that the government was running a surplus when he took office.

After campaigning and governing for years without mentioning a single program that he wanted to eliminate, the President now says 65 of 10,000 federal initiatives should go. Another 63 should be cut sharply. That, however, is barely a start: After all,

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these cuts would collectively save just $4.9 *billion* in a budget that will run at least $2.4 *trillion*. And as Rep. Jeff Flake (R-AZ) points out, many of these initiatives have received hefty increases (and lavish administration endorsements) in recent years, so there is much to cut. Moreover, when Congress approved a $328-billion omnibus spending bill in January, President Bush accepted it with nary a peep about the pork with which it was larded.

The Bush administration has suggested slowing the growth of domestic discretionary outlays. The President will have to fight to make that promise a reality, however, which seems unlikely since the administration has previously refused to take any responsibility for its actions: OMB Director Bolten claims that "extraordinary challenges confronting America" caused the exploding deficit.

Yet the President has requested many of the budget increases approved by Congress. Indeed, the administration has often expressed worries about too *little* spending. For instance, when the appropriations bill for the bloated Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education came before the House last July, the administration was not happy.

In a letter to Congress, the OMB complained about inadequate spending on Pell Grants for colleges; on the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program; on a herd of special-interest education programs; on drug treatment, HIV/AIDS programs, child mentoring initiatives, and parental group homes; and on AmeriCorps. Not once did the OMB object that too much money was allocated.

Claiming that the 2005 budget is fiscally responsible, Bolten employs the usual budget tricks. For instance, he has carefully chosen his numbers, citing "authorizations" rather than actual outlays to minimize apparent spending. Expenditures for 2005 were effectively dumped into the 2004 supplemental appropriation, reducing the apparent increase this year. Unattained (and unattainable) management "efficiencies" are expected to yield financial savings. Reductions are proposed in programs that Congress will never cut. The budget does not include money for operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, which have been running about a billion dollars per week—that will come in a supplemental appropriation after the election. There is even a "contingent offset," or what Ronald Reagan's OMB director David Stockman once called a "magic asterisk," citing future budget savings yet to be identified.

The out-years are even scarier. The new Medicare drug benefit will run at least two trillion dollars in its second decade, and its price will steadily increase with the number of retirees. Comptroller General David Walker recently warned that adding up reported liabilities, the looming Medicare and Social Security deficits, and future veterans' healthcare costs yields an unfunded liability in the tens of trillions of dollars. "Stated differently," Walker adds, "they are likely to exceed $100,000 in additional burden for every man, woman and child in America today, and these amounts are growing every day."

The number of federal employees—and the number of them earning more than $130,000 per year—is also up. And the Bush administration is as enthusiastic about regulating as it is about spending. In his State of the Union Address, the President spent as much time demanding the eradication of steroids from sports as he did explaining the lack of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. Analyst Clyde Wayne Crews reports in his annual "Ten Thousand Commandments" that, in 2002, the Federal Register devoted 75,606 pages to regulations—more than in 2000, Bill Clinton's last year in office.

Despite his pretensions to being a conservative, President Bush is no supporter of limited, constitutional government. He has come to represent the old Scoop Jackson wing of the Democratic Party, which offered avid support for the ever growing welfare-warfare state. And the President is apparently frustrated by the growing resistance to his borrow-and-spend politics. One Republican strategist worried that the deficit was limiting Bush's "ability to have new things to talk about in 2004." In other words, the President has no program other than bigger, more expensive government.

Forget Bush's conservative rhetoric. Overall expenditures rose 7.9 percent in 2002 and 7.3 percent in 2003. Over Bush's first three years, federal spending increased 2.5 times faster than national income.

The Republicans have begun to look like the corrupt Democratic gang they displaced from control of Congress a decade ago. Then-insurgent Republican leader Newt Gingrich attacked Democrats for seeing "no contradiction between adding a billion and a half dollars in pork-barrel [spending] for the politicians in their big-city machines and voting for a balanced budget amendment." Today, the former House Speaker endorses the mammoth Medicare bill and says nothing as GOP members toss pork to all the usual suspects while promising to slash the deficit.

The parties differ only on taxes. Perhaps the President's most important achievement today is his tax cuts. How durable will they prove, however, when he and his party advocate increasing spending on just about every government program? "Evidently the word 'tomorrow' no longer exists in the vocabulary of otherwise responsible members of Congress," observes former Sen. Warren Rudman (R-NH).

Tomorrow, however, will come, as GOP leaders once acknowledged. Then-Majority Whip Tom Delay declared in 1995 that, "By the year 2002, we can have a Federal Government with a balanced budget, or we can continue down the present path towards total fiscal catastrophe." Guess which way we are going—under a Republican President and Congress.

Cutting spending will become "a part of the mantra" of the Bush administration, says Treasury Secretary John Snow. Republicans love to proclaim their commitment to fiscal responsibility, especially in April. The true measure of government, however, is spending. And now everyone in Washington, Republicans and Democrats alike, is for bigger, more expansive, and more expensive government. Increased taxes are sure to follow. ‹C›

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High Marginal Tax Rates on Saving Hurt Us All

Bush's Incremental Reform

by Stephen J. Entin

The personal saving rate in the United States is alarmingly low. The average person saved about nine percent of his disposable (after-tax) personal income in the mid-1980's, about five percent in the mid-90's, but only about two percent so far this decade. These very low rates of saving restrict investment, which, in turn, considerably retards the growth of productivity, wages, and employment and slows the growth of individual income and wealth.

Why is the saving rate so low? In a word: *taxes*. Income is taxed when it is earned. If you use after-tax income to buy food, clothing, or a television, you can generally eat, stay warm, and enjoy the entertainment with no additional federal tax (except for a few federal excise taxes). If you buy a bond or stock or invest in a small business with that same income, however, you pay income taxes on the stream of interest, dividends, profits, or capital gains received (which is a tax on the "enjoyment" that you "buy" when you save). This added layer of tax is the basic income-tax bias against saving. If your saving is in corporate stock, the business also has to pay the corporate tax before distributing dividends to you or reinvesting earnings to increase the value of the business. Either way, corporate income is taxed twice. If you leave your loved ones a modest bequest at death (beyond an exempt amount that is barely enough to keep a couple in an assisted-living facility for a decade), that amount is taxed again by the estate and gift tax (the "death tax").

The cumulative marginal tax rates that result from these multiple layers of taxes on saving can be surprisingly high. The *marginal tax rate* is the tax rate that would be imposed on the last or next unit of activity. Marginal tax rates are key because they govern the choice between working longer or taking more leisure and between consuming more or saving more and expanding a business. In a tax system with exemptions and several progressive, escalating tax rates, the marginal tax rate on the next dollar earned may be much higher than the average tax rate. Also, if the same income is taxed more than once, marginal tax rates can compound and become prohibitively high, destroying incentives to produce and earn.

Before the 2001 Tax Act, there were five statutory federal marginal income-tax rates for individuals: 15 percent, 28 percent, 31 percent, 36 percent, and 39.6 percent. There is also an "Alternative Minimum Tax" (AMT), with rates of 26 to 28 percent, which applies to a broader definition of personal taxable income. The 2001 and 2003 Tax Acts have lowered the rate structure to 10 percent (a new lower bracket), 15 percent, 25 percent, 28 percent, 30 percent, and 35 percent. The 2001 Tax Act will expire in 2011, however, and the rate structure will revert to the pre-2001 levels.

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Applying these tax rates twice to saving, both on the income that is first saved and on the returns to the saving, is a form of double taxation. This second layer of tax against saving can be offset by deferring the tax on all income that is saved and taxing the savings upon withdrawal, as done for limited amounts contributed to a standard IRA or pension plan. It can also be offset by taxing the money before it is saved but not taxing the returns, as in a Roth IRA. The two methods are equivalent if savers face the same tax rate over time.

Neutral tax treatment of saving provides an enormous benefit for savers. For example, assume a 20-percent tax rate. Putting $1,000 yearly of pre-tax income into a tax-deferred pension plan (or $800 after taxes into a Roth IRA) beginning at age 20, at a 7.2-percent real rate of return (the average real growth of the stock market with dividend reinvestment since 1926), would provide $280,000 in retirement assets—after federal taxes—at age 65, or $400,000 at age 70. If the same $1,000 of pre-tax income is subject to ordinary tax treatment, only $800 in after-tax principal can be saved each year, and the interest and dividends would be taxed annually. That account would provide only $178,000 for retirement spending at age 65, or $240,000 at age 70. Savers would be 57 to 67 percent better off under a tax-neutral treatment of saving.

The 2001 Tax Act addressed this problem by expanding the amounts that people can contribute to their IRA's and adding "catch-up" contributions for people over age 50. The act also increased the amounts people can contribute each year to 401(k) and 403(b) plans, lifted the income limits for participating, allowed catch-up contributions, and created education IRA's. And the President's 2005 budget proposes replacing most current law regarding retirement, education, and medical saving arrangements with three broad, simple saving programs. Lifetime Savings Accounts (LSA's) would let people put aside, after tax, up to $5,000 each year, and all earnings would be free from additional tax. The money could be withdrawn for any purpose, at any age. LSA's would replace current education and medical saving plans. Retirement Saving Accounts (RSA's) would let people put aside for retirement up to $5,000 or their total wage income, whichever is less. RSA's would replace current IRA's for future contributions. Employer-Based Savings Accounts (ESA's) would replace future contributions to 401(k), SIMPLE 401(k), Thrift, 403(b), and Governmental 457 plans, and SIMPLE IRA's and SARSEP's.

In addition to the basic income-tax bias against saving, people who save by purchasing stocks face another layer of tax bias: the corporate income tax. The top corporate tax rate is 35 percent, and there is a corporate AMT. Before the 2001 Tax Act, the combined corporate and top personal income-tax rates on corporate earnings paid out as dividends exceeded 60 percent. The combined top tax rate on retained earnings resulting

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in a long-term capital gain, at a top capital-gains rate of 20 percent, reached 48 percent. The 2001 Tax Act trimmed personal income-tax rates. Even better, the 2003 Tax Act lowered the long-term capital-gains tax rate to 15 percent and did the same for dividends paid out of corporate income that had been subject to tax. (Dividends of firms not subject to a corporate tax are treated as ordinary income.) At the reduced 15-percent tax rate, the top combined tax rate on corporate income for either dividends or retained earnings is just under 45 percent.

The 2003 dividend and capital-gains tax-rate cut raised after-tax incentives to save and own stock and made it less costly for firms to raise money to invest. It encourages firms to issue more stock and to take on less debt and significantly reduces double taxation. Fully eliminating the additional layer of tax on corporate income would require taxing corporate income on either the corporation's tax return or the shareholder's tax return, instead of on both.

The federal unified gift and estate tax (the "death tax") hits saving yet again. Every cent saved to create an estate either has been taxed or will be taxed under some provision of the income tax. Ordinary saving by the deceased was taxed repeatedly when he and any companies whose shares he may have owned paid individual and corporate income taxes. Saving in a tax-deferred retirement plan will be subject to the heirs' income taxes and was subject to the corporate income tax in the case of stock holdings.

Before 2001, the estate and gift tax rate topped out at 55 percent if a parent left money to a child, but it could reach almost 80 percent under the Generation Skipping Tax (GST) if the bequest went to a grandchild or other relative more than one generation removed from the deceased. The GST rate is equivalent to imposing a 55-percent tax on the estate (as if it had gone to a child) and then imposing another 55 percent on the remaining 45 percent of the estate, as if it had gone from the child to the grandchild.

The death tax probably does not raise any net revenue for the government. Prof. B. Douglas Bernheim of Stanford estimates that deliberate avoidance of the estate tax—by giving assets to children, most of whom are in lower income-tax brackets than their parents—costs more in reduced income-tax revenue on the earnings of the assets than the estate tax picks up. Gary and Aldona Robbins of Fiscal Associates estimate that the reduced savings and capital formation lower the GDP and wages enough that the reduction in income and payroll taxes exceeds the take from the estate tax. Even if they are both only half right, the tax loses money. Repeal of the estate tax would pay for itself and would encourage wealth and job creation.

If a couple nearing retirement thought of working an extra year to add to an estate, the combined income, payroll, and estate tax rates could have exceeded 78 percent, or even 90 percent with the GST, under the old law. That is quite an incentive to retire instead of continuing to work or to reinvest interest or dividends in an estate. The 2001 Tax Act will reduce the top estate-tax rate to 45 percent by 2007, and it raises the exempt amounts for the estate and gift tax. It will eliminate the estate tax in 2010, but the tax will reappear at the old rate in 2011 unless Congress votes to make the repeal permanent.

The income of all businesses (including noncorporate businesses) is overstated and overtaxed by forcing businesses to wait for years or decades to record the costs of their capital outlays. The write-offs lose the time value of money and lose value to inflation. For example, a dollar spent on a seven-year asset gets a write-off that is worth only 91 cents in present value if inflation is zero. A dollar spent on a building (written off over 39 years) gets a deduction worth just 55 cents in present value.

The cost of the delay rises with inflation. At five percent inflation, the seven-year asset's write-off is worth only 81 cents, and the building's write-off drops in value to 30 cents. At modest rates of inflation, the overstatement of business income by depreciation can effectively double the apparent tax rate. During periods of double-digit inflation in the 1970's, some capital-intensive businesses with lots of long-lived assets, such as utilities, steel mills, and railroads, were taxed at more than 100 percent of their real earnings! To reflect the timing and the cost of investment accurately, businesses' capital outlays should be written off at once (expensed), not depreciated. The 2002 Tax Act provided a "bonus depreciation" provision allowing all businesses to expense 30 percent of their equipment spending (depreciating the rest as usual). The 2003 Act raised that "bonus depreciation" allowance to 50 percent. Both provisions expire at the end of 2004.

Many tax deductions, exemptions, or credits are phased out as people's incomes rise. These phaseouts cause taxable income or tax liability to rise faster than the jump in actual earnings would otherwise bring about, and they act as a hidden increase in the tax rate on the added income.

For example, the phaseouts of personal exemptions and itemized deductions effectively raise the top income-tax rates by 2.5 to 5 percentage points for a couple, depending on the number of their dependents. The 2001 Tax Act will gradually eliminate these phaseouts between 2006 and 2010, but they will reappear if the cuts are not made permanent.

Social Security recipients who have enough income to be subject to income taxation of benefits face very high marginal tax rates. Effective marginal tax rates on an added dollar of interest and pension income can reach 42 or 52 percent for people supposedly in the 28-percent bracket. These penalties punish people for having saved for retirement. For added wage income subject to the payroll tax, the rates can reach 65 percent. If the wages exceed the Social Security earnings test limit, the combined federal tax rates and loss of benefits can cost retirees over 100 percent of their incremental income. This is a federal edict not to work, issued against the most experienced people in the workforce.

Various provisions of the Bush tax cuts have directly addressed each of the excess layers of taxation of saving and investment. In fact, I would describe the changes as incremental tax reform. However, these provisions were enacted on a temporary basis because of ridiculous congressional budget-process rules. The expensing provisions die at the end of this year. The marginal-tax-rate cuts and the estate-tax repeal will expire at the start of 2011. The reduced tax rates on dividends and capital gains will expire at the start of 2009.

The President's 2005 budget proposes making permanent the rate cuts, dividend and capital-gains relief, and the estate-tax repeal—all good moves. It would allow the 50-percent "bonus depreciation" provision to lapse, which is a mistake. These provisions should be extended or replaced with more sweeping pro-saving, pro-investment reforms. Claims that these provisions favor the rich are false. Those who gain the most from additional saving and investment in the U.S. economy are the workers who become more productive and better paid as a result. ◁c

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The Naked Truth of Tax Policy

Cloaks of Deception

by Dan R. Mastromarco

More than three years have passed since then-treasury secretary nominee Paul A. O'Neill made one of the first of his now-famous public exposés. To the smug applause of the U.S. Senate Finance Committee and muffled chortling, he boldly exclaimed during confirmation testimony that he was not planning simply to reform the corporate income tax; he wanted to eliminate it altogether. To these elder statesmen, it was as if Mr. O'Neill had the audacity to utter the equivalent of the innocent child's observation in the famous Hans Christian Andersen fairy tale.

Today, Secretary O'Neill has been abruptly returned to the private sector, while the U.S. corporate tax not only survives but has been elevated to the fourth-highest corporate rate (35 percent) among developed nations—higher even than those of Sweden, Germany, and France and almost triple Ireland's 12.5-percent rate. No one has seriously pursued legislation to implement Mr. O'Neill's recommendation.

The problem was not bad timing—the Enron era, with its anticorporate backlash, had not yet begun. Nor were the senators blind to his point. They knew O'Neill's observation about our broken tax system was as right as it was blunt. Corporate taxes are just a convenient way to disguise the true tax burden that the consumers of corporate goods and services (that is, you and I) ultimately pay and to make tax lawyers wealthy. Some of the same members of Congress who profess bewilderment as to why American firms expatriate know the naked truth is that corporate taxes burden citizens, not corporations.

They also know several other things. They know that our assumptions about who actually pays corporate taxes make all the difference in the world to the political viability of corporate tax reform—not to mention the political longevity of those brave enough to suggest it. They know that attempting to repeal corporate taxes would be perceived as pro-business and anti-poor. They know that the modern version of Andersen's Imperial Court Weavers will conclude that the repeal of corporate taxes (double taxes) will only help wealthy investors. They know that a proposal to repeal corporate taxes is dead on arrival because no elected official would be accused of such craven and heartless attacks on the poor. They know that the naked truth is not enough to change tax policy in Washington because the modern Imperial Court Weavers cloak bad ideas with an array of incomplete assumptions to ensure that no policymaker will expose the truth for fear of being labeled, as were the courtiers in the fable, "unfit for his office."

Who are today's Imperial Court Weavers? They are unelected government officials whose estimates of the revenue costs of proposals and the distributional effects are accepted as gospel by Congress. They are the ones, for example, who officially estimated that repealing the death tax would cost two-and-a-half times what it is projected to raise. They are the ones who officially estimated the revenue gain from a 100-percent confiscatory tax on incomes of more than $100,000 (responding to a tongue-in-cheek request by a Senate finance chairman) at several billion dollars per year.

These officials weave a colorful embroidery of assumptions that serve effectively to condemn any criticism of the existing system as "unpardonably stupid." Often dismissed as mere technicalities, the assumptions they choose literally determine the cost of reforms and their political viability, and they function as a bulwark against any constructive change.

Let us assume, for example, that we were seriously to try to repeal the corporate tax, as O'Neill and others have suggested. The seemingly simple question *Who benefits?* would soon be raised by politicians who want a three-sentence reply to a pesky constituent's letter; TV commentators who will demand six-second soundbites to match their audience's attention span; trade groups who want to rile their members; journalists seeking to answer the question within the confines of an 800-word essay; and advocates who want to commit the equivalent of a fly-by policy shooting.

The "technical" question will be referred to the Imperial Court Weavers, who will draw a very big "official" assumption. They will tell king, courtier, and townspeople alike that it is the shareholders who pay corporate taxes, not consumers or wage-earners—and, further, that lower returns to shareholders have no deleterious effect on their level of investment.

The naked truth about the question of "incidence" is that the one who writes a check to the IRS does not necessarily pay the tax, ultimately. Rather, when a tax is imposed on a corporation, it is like a hot potato, which the business tries to pass along to someone else. Taxes are paid by consumers in the form of higher-priced goods and services, in wage reductions as companies pay workers less, or in reduced returns to shareholders (who are often also the consumers and workers, if they hope to retire on more than Social Security). If we were to admit that corporate taxes are ultimately paid by consumers or wage-earners, then we would realize that their repeal would benefit consumers or workers. If we recognized that taxing corporate investment lowers investment returns, then we would also realize that it lowers both investment and, ultimately, real wages. Nobody really knows who is stuck with the potato, but the modern-day Imperial Weavers are not plagued by such doubts: Those who support corporate-tax repeal, they say, are "villains."

Assume, instead, we want to reduce marginal tax rates. Economists believe that lower marginal rates result in much higher

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rates of economic growth. Unfortunately, the Imperial Weavers will assume that tax burdens should be viewed on an annual basis. By providing Congress charts depicting distribution only on this basis, they ensure that flatter marginal rates are assumed to hurt the poor and to benefit the rich, even if they are the same people at different stages of life. Supporting a single rate, therefore, "merely prove[s] one very stupid and unfit for his office."

If we were, instead, to analyze the tax burden as taxes paid over the course of a lifetime, then the distribution of flatter taxes may look as progressive as our current income tax but without the disincentives toward work and savings. Consider, for example, an imaginary economy with only two taxpayers—a father and son—and two tax rates, 40 and 10 percent. Now consider a proposal to level the rate to 25 percent. Both father and son earn precisely the same lifetime income. It should not really matter to the government or to them if we imposed a flat rate of 25 percent on each. The truth is that major biases result from gauging tax burdens annually. A very large share, perhaps substantially over half of the income-distribution inequalities in our economy, are simply a function of the fact that more experienced and older workers earn more than their younger counterparts. In fact, it would be misleading to characterize these normal changes in income over peoples' lifetimes as class-based income inequality.

If we analyze the tax burden as taxes paid over annual income (*i.e.*, if we look at the father and son as a snapshot in time), the temporarily "affluent" father will get a huge tax cut; the temporarily "poor" son, a huge tax increase. The implicit public policy recommendation of the Imperial Court Weavers is this: The only way to be fair is to impose a publicly enforced increase in allowance by taxing the father to make transfer payments to his son. Therefore, supporting a single lower marginal rate, even though beneficial to the economy, "merely prove[s] one very stupid and unfit for his office,"

There is more. Imagine a nominee for treasury secretary bold enough to support a consumption tax. Consumption taxes, for each dollar raised, are far less damaging to the economy than taxes on capital, let alone less damaging to privacy or civil rights. Even though the former chairman of the powerful House Ways and Means Committee was purportedly a supporter, Washington has not yet enacted a consumption tax. Indeed, all the Democratic presidential hopefuls are proposing tax increases that would fall largely on capital rather than on consumption, and to great applause. When they advocate destructive "taxes on the rich"—such as higher marginal tax rates on upper-income people and higher tax rates on capital gains, dividends, and corporations—they are, in fact, calling for higher taxes on productive saving and investment. These higher taxes would depress investment, productivity, and wage growth, making workers bear the ultimate cost. They are, in effect, praising the embroidery on the fictitious robes.

What politicians have to fear from supporting consumption taxes is that here, too, the distribution charts will show that they wish to steal from the poor, who consume a disproportionately higher amount of their income. That is because the Imperial Weavers assume taxes paid over income is the only measure of the "ability to pay." In the view of defenders of the income-tax system, this method provides the "right" answer—that the income tax is the "fairest" system because the more we increase taxes based on income, the more taxes are paid. Anyone who thinks otherwise is "unfit for office."

In truth, income is just a surrogate of the "ability to pay" and a rather poor one at that. Intellectual arguments for consumption taxation can be traced to Thomas Hobbes, who argued some 350 years ago that "the Equality of Imposition consisteth rather in the Equality of that which is consumed, than of the riches of the persons that consume the same. For what reason is there, that he which laboureth much, and sparing the fruits of his labour, consumeth little, should be more charged." Is it not possible that *consumption* is a better measure of one's ability to pay than income is? Could it be that what we consume for personal gratification is a better way of defining our ability to pay taxes than what we earn in a given year, because what we do not spend we simply defer for future consumption, invest, or give to charity? Is it not as much a political decision—not a scientific one—to measure distributional equity by taxes paid over income earned in a given year rather than over consumption? If tax distribution were measured as taxes paid over consumption, supporters of a consumption tax would be the heroes of the poor.

> If we were to admit that corporate taxes are ultimately paid by consumers or wage-earners, then we would realize that their repeal would benefit consumers or workers.

As the Imperial Weavers weave their cloaks of deception, they function as a closed group that chooses the authority on which they will rely. Few oversee their workshop. They need not publish their findings or their methodology or their math. They can choose to write a report or to estimate legislation or not to do these things almost entirely at their own discretion. In fact, members of Congress—even Ways and Means members—must cajole them to perform estimates. From their edicts, there is neither review nor appeal. As a result, their body of conclusions, like the clothes of the emperor, not only go unchallenged but are admired. As in the fable, they ensure that "no one—from the king, to his ministers—really has the courage to say what their eyes tell them."

To make real progress, tax reformers must learn simply to question the words of the Imperial Court Weavers. Before they can enact a consumption tax, repeal the death tax, impose a territorial tax system, increase the ability of the middle class to save, rid us of the Alternative Minimum Tax, and lower tax rates so that our manufacturers do not expatriate, they must confront the Imperial Court Weavers who develop and sustain the false and misleading assumptions on which bad tax policy is based.

Next time you hear an innocent exclaim, "But he has nothing on!" remember that, in the fairy tale, the people ultimately did begin to whisper to one another what the child had said. Then, they said it louder and louder. "A child says he has nothing on!" Soon, all the people were saying aloud, "But, he has nothing on!" And, in the end, the emperor heard what they said, and he shivered, for he knew that their words were true. c

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How Many Priests?

The Numbers Tell the Story

by Philip Jenkins

For over a decade, the Roman Catholic Church has been in deep crisis over the issue of sexual abuse by Her clergy. That some priests had molested or raped children was indisputable, but just how many had offended? The numbers are more than a simple matter of statistical curiosity. While everyone agrees that "one case is too many," our view of the priesthood must be radically different if misbehavior was (and is) generalized and systematic rather than the responsibility of a couple of notorious rogues. How many pedophile priests are out there?

Finally, we have the answer to this question, or at least the nearest approach we are going to get. Under overwhelming public pressure, the Catholic bishops sponsored an independent report undertaken by the highly reputable John Jay College of Criminal Justice. (The full text of the report, released on February 27, can be obtained online at *catholicreviewboard.com/johnjaypdfindex.html*). At first glance, the numbers sound appalling. As newspapers and television news programs noted, between 1950 and 2002, 4,392 priests were accused of abuse—a daunting number—and this group was accused of molesting 10,667 victims below the age of 18. As victims'-rights groups immediately complained, the likelihood that other instances of abuse had gone unreported meant that even these victimization figures might represent only the tip of an iceberg. Surely, not even the most sanguine member of the hierarchy could possibly take comfort in these findings.

Yet, once we have acknowledged the undoubted reality of abuse, and all the attendant emotional suffering, the report actually raises many significant questions about the popular stereotype of the "abuse crisis," and, particularly, about its causes. And—though this was little noticed at the time—the report has quite explosive implications for understanding the recent history of the Catholic Church in America.

The primary question, of course, is how prevalent abusive behavior is and was among the Catholic clergy, and, in fact, the report reinforces the lower and more conservative estimates. While the roster of abusive priests certainly omits some unreported cases, it also includes instances of priests who have been accused on weak or shaky evidence. Investigators are counting all charges "not withdrawn or known to be false," and total exoneration is a very high standard. The list thus includes allegations that would not have surfaced except in the furor of 2002-03. (An incredible *one third* of all accusations date from this two-year period, when priestly misdeeds hit the headlines almost daily). Of the 4,392 accused priests, almost 56 percent faced only one allegation of misconduct, and at least some of these would vanish under detailed scrutiny.

Anyone who has dealt with clergy-abuse cases knows that the victims run the full gamut of plausibility. The great majority are unquestionably sincere souls who have been deeply traumatized by their awful experiences, but a minority of accusers are blatantly in it for the money. These are the entrepreneurs who wait until after Father X dies to allege that he fondled them 30 years ago, an impossible charge either to verify or to contest. Given the legal environment today, however, cynical accusers know that an embattled diocese is likely to settle rather than face a hostile jury. A few so-called victims—a truly dangerous group—are disturbed individuals who have convinced themselves that they were victimized by priests, usually in impossible settings, and, again, their charges would not have been taken seriously in most previous eras. Fifteen years ago, they would have been denouncing satanic covens rather than priests.

In short, balancing the undercounting with the overreporting, the four-percent figure *is* probably a realistic estimate of the actual number of priests who have engaged in some form of abusive behavior. For what it is worth, my own estimate has been around three percent, though, in my book *The New Anti-Catholicism*, I gave the likely range as between one and five percent. If my estimate was marginally on the low side, I was nowhere near as wildly off as the vociferous advocates of a "Clergy Crisis" who gave the proportion of abusive priests as 10 or 20 percent, or more. One victim group, The Linkup, calculates that "Estimates of pedophile priests = 3,000 (6.1%) to 8,000 (16.3%) . . . Current experts claim a pedophile could abuse 200-265 children in a lifetime . . . 188 Bishops are responsible for the pain of at least 601,600 direct victims and as many as 9,475,200 indirect victims—a total of as many as 10,076,800 people" (*theharrowing.com/stats.html*). And that would not include priests active with teenagers, who could represent another ten percent or so of abusive clergy. As the John Jay investigators have now shown, such numbers, stemming from anticlerical activist groups, are commonly pseudostatistics.

The Linkup figures also point to another common belief that is now shattered—namely, that each abusive priest targeted vast numbers of children and youngsters. Fr. Andrew Greeley once suggested that each and every errant priest would have molested 50 or more victims. According to the evidence, though, over half of accused priests faced just one allegation, and the real problem was an extremely small core of highly persistent serial pedophiles, who massively "over-produced" criminal behavior—men such as John Geoghan or James Porter. Each of these serial molesters provoked ten or more allegations, and some were the targets of hundreds of plausible complaints. A select group of just 149 men accounted for over a quarter of

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Philip Jenkins is the author of several books, including The New Anti-Catholicism: The Last Acceptable Prejudice *(Oxford University Press).*

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all of the allegations from the entire half-century.

Looking at the report's comprehensive tables, it seems that most dioceses were doing a surprisingly good job coping with reports of misbehavior, working as they did on the apparently correct assumption that, once a complaint was received about a priest, he would not reoffend. The well-publicized disasters occurred with the hard core of unstoppable serial offenders, a type of sexual deviant that was scarcely recognized in the criminological literature until very recent times. The fact that such cases proliferated in some areas—above all, Boston—indicates a massive administrative failure in those regions but not a situation that was typical of the whole Church.

By the way, the 149 priestly superpredators also distort the study in other ways. Reading the report, many were struck by the remarkably high number of very young victims, suggesting that a high proportion of abusive clergy were true pedophiles. In fact, a large proportion of the young children listed were the victims of the small cohort of extreme multiple offenders. Including these cases serves to lower the average age of the total victim population. While few priests are pedophiles, pedophilic priests claim a vastly disproportionate number of victims.

Let me suggest a slightly different way—a rather more positive way—of interpreting the figures in the John Jay report. Over the past half-century, the overwhelming majority of Catholic priests—24 out of 25—never once attracted an allegation of sexual misconduct with minors, even in the overheated and litigious atmosphere of the past three years. As for serial pedophiles—those monsters of the popular stereotype—they were extraordinarily rare, accounting for perhaps one priest out of every 750.

In any given year in this same long period, out of a Church averaging around 50,000 priests and 45 to 55 million members, perhaps 200 children were abused or molested nationwide, a disproportionately high number of them in Boston and New England. As to whether this overall figure is large or small relative to other institutions, we simply do not know, because no other social or professional group has ever been subjected to anything like the same scrutiny. Nor can it be known whether this represents a distinctly Catholic crisis. Since the term *crisis* indicates acute severity, however, we must ask: *Acute compared to what?* I would like to see the John Jay team let loose, with comparably intrusive powers of access, among the files of the nation's public-school teachers.

For the sake of argument, however, let us grant that the Catholic Church faces and has faced a persistent and wide-ranging problem of clerical misbehavior. What were its causes? Perhaps surprisingly, given its remit, the new report not only describes patterns of abuse but strongly suggests an historical and social context: Almost certainly, we are looking at the effects of the Second Vatican Council on the Church in America. This is evident from the demographic characteristics of the accused priests. No less than a quarter were ordained between 1960 and 1969, and the typical "profile" of abusive clergy points to a man born about 1940 and ordained at the end of the 1960's. Equally suggestive is what we now know about the date at which the recorded misbehavior occurred. One astonishing table (page 19 of the report) shows a Himalayan peak in reported abuse between 1975 and 1980, an awful six-year period that produced over 40 percent of all recorded incidents for the whole 52-year era under study. Reported incidents have plummeted since the late 80's, and this change probably reflects a real decline of abusive behavior. Certainly, the vast majority of dioceses toughened their response to abuse in these years, and most introduced quite draconian codes of conduct in response to the crises of 1992-94. In that sense, the nightmare is past or passing.

Though the correlation of clerical misbehavior with the post-Vatican II era looks solid, the reasons for the linkage are open to debate. Probably, moral and disciplinary controls over priests did undergo a grave decline, in consequence of the hemorrhage of men leaving the priesthood. Higher authorities simply tolerated levels of misbehavior that they would once have stamped on in the knowledge that the offenders could easily be replaced—but that older assumption was no longer valid in 1975 or 1980. Also, clergy in the 60's and 70's were not immune from social pressures toward sexual experimentation, the sense that old injunctions against adultery or pederasty were destined to perish in the new age of ethical relativism. The "typical" offender grew up within the certainties of the church of the 1950's and saw them progressively demolished in the late 60's: Perhaps naturally, he saw no reason why the process would not continue indefinitely. Why should he not indulge his desires?

For whatever reason, the "abuse crisis" has to be seen as a generational phenomenon, associated especially with a cohort of priests who began their careers in post-Vatican II chaos. A startling ten percent of priests ordained in 1970 would ultimately be the focus of abuse allegations. (In recording this grim fact, we should not, of course, forget that, even in these years, the vast majority of priests would remain true to their vocations.)

To turn to a still-more-explosive theory: How far was the abuse problem a homosexual issue? Responding to the release of the John Jay report, the *Washington Times* headlined "Gay Priests Cited In Abuse Of Boys." Justifying this statement, the newspaper stressed the heavy preponderance of young male victims, which apparently has grown substantially over the decades. But the homosexual element of the story is at once exaggerated in some ways and underplayed in others. The fact that most of the priests studied abused boys rather than girls does not, of course, imply that male homosexuals as such have any particular tendency toward child molestation, so, to that extent, any "gay" emphasis would be misplaced. Yet having said this, adult homosexual men may well have a sexual interest in male teenagers, just as some heterosexual men are attracted to 16-year-old girls. This kind of attraction accounts for a large component of the "single complaint" clergy cases, and this element of the problem can legitimately be linked to homosexuality within the priesthood. Much of the problem involves not pedophilia or molestation, but *pederasty*—that all-but-forgotten word. To some extent, the peak of clerical abuse does correlate with the growth of homosexual clerical subcultures during the 1970's.

Though ostensibly a close study of a clerical "crime wave," the John Jay report offers rich materials that illuminate many other aspects of Church life and development. And, though the data can be interpreted in many ways, one powerful theme seems to be a grave indictment of Church administration and clerical culture in the aftermath of the Second Vatican Council. I wonder if the criminologists and social scientists involved realized what a contribution they were making to modern church history? c

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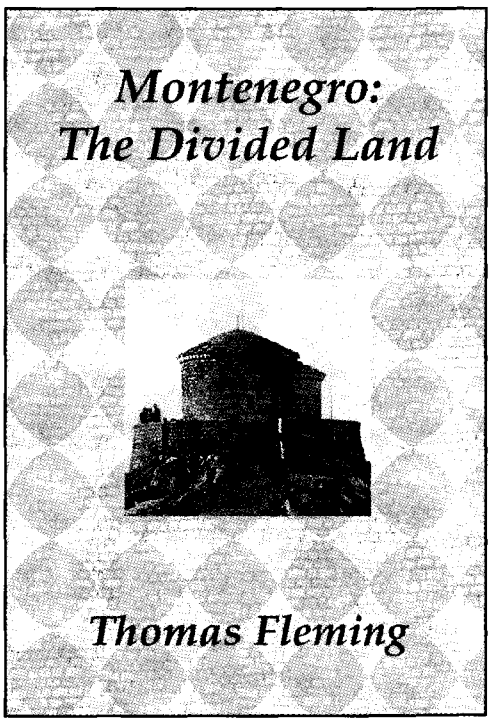
This Time, Be Prepared

The Serb land of Montenegro is once again at the crossroads of history. The blood-soaked mountains and dramatic coastline of this small land have been fought over by Illyrians, Macedonians, Romans, Byzantines, Turks, and Venetians, and, in the 20th century, by the armies of Austria-Hungary, Italy, and Germany. In World War II, Montenegro lost more men, per capita, than any nation of Europe, and now it is the latest target of the so-called international community, which has tried to create a phony separatist movement (complete with a bogus national church) to continue the disastrous policies that have involved the United States in wars over Bosnia and Kosovo.

Thomas Fleming has written the first well-researched history of Montenegro in the English language, taking the story from ancient times all the way up to the current crisis over separation from Serbia. This is no dry academic tome but a lively account of a brave people whose brave history rivals the tales of Leonidas and his Spartans at Thermopylae.



"Dr. Fleming has given us an unbiased history of our people that is compact yet thorough, with all the characteristics of a serious, well-documented, scientific study."

—Slavenko Terzic
Serbian Academy of Arts and Sciences

"Dr. Fleming's book is a fascinating account of the heroic struggle of the Montenegrin people to defend their freedom and liberty against all odds. It tells their magnificent story in a stirring narrative that combines scholarly research with astute observation of how this tiny nation today may yet face its greatest challenge."

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Rule Columbia!

by Daniel McCarthy

"The Empire is peace."

—Napoleon III

The Imperial Tense: Prospects and Problems of American Empire
edited by Andrew J. Bacevich
Chicago: Ivan R. Dee;
272 pp., $16.95

Imperial America: The Bush Assault on the World Order
by John Newhouse
New York: Alfred A. Knopf;
196 pp., $23.00

◆

If the publishing industry has played any part in the supposed recent economic revival, it can, perhaps, thank George W. Bush. The President's foreign policy has made it possible to sell thousands of books with the words *empire* or *imperial* in the title. Indeed, it sometimes seems as if there are a dozen such books published each month. It is hard to keep count.

Of all these books, the best might still be one of the first: Andrew J. Bacevich's *American Empire* from 2002, which has just been reissued in paperback. Bacevich's thesis is that U.S. foreign policy has had consistent goals throughout the past half-century, no matter which party was in power or what ideological fads gripped the country. The overriding goal is the pursuit of "openness," meaning something like the free movement of goods (above all), people, and (maybe) ideas across national borders—all to the benefit of American business and political interests, of course. U.S. foreign policy, according to Bacevich, has been defined by domestic needs—chiefly, the need for markets.

H. Ward Sterett

For his analysis, Bacevich drew upon the work of left-wing but non-Marxist historians Charles Beard (*An Economic Interpretation of the Constitution*) and William Appleman Williams. Bacevich himself, however, is not a man of the left, and his conclusion to *American Empire* would come as cold comfort to Beard or Williams if either were alive to read it, since Bacevich argues that—however much he might dislike what the republic has become—it is much too late to turn back the clock. Empire is here to stay. Bacevich might just as well have quoted Pericles at the end of his book: "Your empire now is like a tyranny: it may have been wrong to take it; it is certainly dangerous to let it go." Whatever the right or wrong of it, Americans must now accept their empire and learn to govern it well.

The Imperial Tense: Prospects and Problems of American Empire, edited by Bacevich, picks up where *American Empire* leaves off. The book is Bacevich's attempt to clear away the jargon of international-studies departments and the claptrap of political speech to present the educated layman with a frank and plainspoken account of the American imperium as seen by four distinct schools of thought. Bacevich has had enough of archaic talk about "isolationism" and "realism," and he proposes, instead, a more up-to-date taxonomy: The four camps he outlines in his introductory essay are those who embrace empire eagerly; those who do so more reluctantly; those who reject empire altogether; and those who cannot admit that empire even exists. Bacevich is one of the reluctant imperialists.

Most of the contributors to *The Imperial Tense* are university professors or journalists. Ideologically, they run the gamut of respectable opinion, from neoconservative to moderate liberal to far left. Absent, for the most part, is anyone from the explicitly anti-imperial right, with the notable exception of James Kurth, who provides the collection's last and best essay. The lack of antiwar conservative contributors is curious. Bacevich includes contributors from the *World Socialist Web Site* and from *National Review Online*, so why not Justin Raimondo or another *Antiwar.com* contributor? Why not someone from a paleoconservative print magazine? The usual excuse, that paleos are too marginal, will not work here. If Bacevich wants to present the most serious and plainspoken views on the American Empire, there is no shortage of suitable commentary on the unfashionable right.

The material that has made it into the

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book is of variable quality, some of it as good as *American Empire* itself, and some of it, sad to say, of value only as a kind of pathological case study. The essays from Victor Davis Hanson and John Milbank especially stand out as examples of the latter. Both men are undeniably insightful in their academic fields—Hanson as a classicist; Milbank as a theologian. Hanson the wartime polemicist, however, demonstrates what a terrible thing it is to waste a mind, and his contribution here—the sole essay denying that America has become an empire of some kind—illuminates nothing. Milbank is a greater loss: His piece is the only one that tries to provide, in part, a Christian interpretation of the American Empire in the age of terror. At least Milbank is thought-provoking, though shrill.

Essays by David Rieff, Deepak Lal, and Charles Krauthammer make up the "eager imperialist" contingent. For Rieff, a liberal, American power means putting a stop to ethnic cleansing in Bosnia (as long as it is not the Serbs who are getting killed). Lal, an economist at UCLA, is a *homo economicus* conservative: For him, empire is a public-goods argument. Just as government is needed to provide order within states, global government is necessary for international order. This will lower transaction costs, facilitate "the free flow of goods, capital and people," and keep the peace among states. Lal seems not to notice that, in order to accomplish such peacekeeping, the imperial power has to resort to *war*. The reader is left with the impression that war is not war so long as it is waged by the United States. So much for plainspokenness.

Krauthammer makes the same argument in slightly different terms, claiming that American hegemony can and should be a force for the greater global good. Conveniently, what is best for the world is also best for America, at least as Krauthammer sees it. Unlike Lal, he is admirably candid, ending his piece with a play on Benjamin Franklin: "History has given you an empire, if you will keep it." Clearly, Krauthammer is enjoying himself.

Victor Davis Hanson is the sole example from the America-is-not-an-empire school. That Bacevich did not include any others of this perspective suggests his own prejudices against those who live with their heads in the sand (of Iraq, maybe?). The anti-imperialist contingent, on the other hand, is well represented. In addition to Milbank, David North of the *World Socialist Web Site*, Gabriel Ash of *YellowTimes.org*, and agrarian writer Wendell Berry all present unflinching condemnations of the American Empire. Ash argues that the United States has been imperial since long before the election of George W. Bush, whose incompetence, Ash believes, may lead to hegemony's self-destruction. Ash, Berry, and Milbank find corporate capitalism behind America's post-September 11 foreign policy, though none adopts a simplistically Marxist view.

David North is much more predictable than Ash and Berry in how he goes about making his case. Global empire is both unjust in itself and serves as a distraction from the need for more government intervention in the domestic economy. Even North recognizes, however, that the hidden hand of the market cannot work without a hidden fist. North blames McDonald's; he might more properly blame McDonnell-Douglas.

More moderate liberal contributors, such as Stanley Hoffman of Harvard University, simply ask the United States to pay more heed to international law and international institutions. They speak with the voice of the establishment, and here the reader can find, in embryo, the foreign policy of a John Kerry administration. What Hoffman, Charles S. Maier (another Harvard professor), and David Marquand (formerly of Oxford) all recommend is not altogether different from what Charles Krauthammer would like to see. While Krauthammer and company believe in an American Empire unbridled by international institutions, the center-left wants an American Empire that works through international institutions. Within the broad party of empire, this may be a major point of contention, but, to those outside of that big tent, it looks like what Freud, right for once, called "the narcissism of small differences."

The most important and most interesting of the chapters are those contributed by the reluctant imperialists who offer the reader a bit of historical perspective. German historian Peter Bender addresses the parallels (and divergences) between America and Rome and asks the most important question in the book: "Can the United States remain a republic if it rules an empire?" It is not a question Bender answers, although the reader may certainly draw his own conclusions from the context provided by Roman history. American journalist Martin Walker, on the other hand, argues that the American Empire is nothing like Rome's or, for that matter, Britain's. Walker surely is right to caution against taking historical analogies too literally, but Bender, the better historian, is more persuasive—and incisive.

Bacevich likes the Rome metaphor enough to use it in the title of his own essay, "New Rome, New Jerusalem." Specifically, Bacevich's contribution is about how the New Jerusalem has become the New Rome, as America's congenital messianic impulses have taken form in foreign policy. In the few pages he has here, Bacevich adds little to what he has said before in *American Empire*. He repeats his complaint from the earlier book that America is becoming too decadent a civilization to shoulder her imperial burdens. "Freedom has come to mean treating the market and market values as sacrosanct (the economic agenda of the Right) and celebrating individual autonomy (the cultural agenda of the Left)."

There is trouble to be found, too, in James Kurth's "Who Will Do the Dirty Work?" which connects empire and immigration. In short, European imperial powers that once ruled over Third World countries (before they were called the Third World) now find themselves swamped with immigrants from their former colonies. Why has this happened? In part, naturally enough, because former colonies were convenient sources for cheap labor. "Colonial workers not only knew how to work; they also were more likely than non-colonial peoples to know the distinctive national language, codes, and rules of the citizens within the metropole." In Europe, this postimperial immigration is creating two nations within each of the erstwhile mother countries: a rich, white, post-Christian nation and a poor, nonwhite, Muslim one. In America, however, mass immigration and imperialism already coexist, a phenomenon that Kurth predicts will transform the United States into an empire—with attendant ethnic and class-based stratifications—at home as well as abroad. When the empire eventually collapses, the immigrants will remain, and the metropole will effectively have been colonized by the people it once ruled.

Too few of the other essays in *The Imperial Tense* raise such problems, which considerably lessens the value of what is still a very worthwhile book. Too many of the contributors represent predictable,

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unexamined party lines. It may be instructive to see how Charles Krauthammer couches his defense of imperialism; it is certainly entertaining to see how Deepak Lal does it. What, however, would either of these men make of the problems raised by James Kurth, or even the rather less trenchant ones brought to the fore by Bacevich? Most of the contributors to this volume simply assert themselves at cross-purposes to one another. No matter how candid or accessible they may be, very few of the writers in this anthology have even begun to come to grips with reality outside of their own beliefs, fears, and fantasies. This makes *The Imperial Tense* a rather more trivial exercise than *American Empire*.

The book should not be ignored, however. It would be worth reading, even owning, for the Kurth essay alone. Even where it fails, the book is useful as an illustration of how shortsighted some of its contributors are. It shows how the Bush administration could invade and occupy a country without having any clear plan ahead of time for administering the newly conquered province. Maybe there is something to what J.R. Seeley once said: Empires really can be acquired in a fit of absence of mind.

Absence of mind, if not empire, is a central theme of John Newhouse's *Imperial America: The Bush Assault on the World Order*, which offers a countervailing argument to Bacevich's *American Empire*. For Newhouse, the remarkable thing about Bush's foreign policy is its trailblazing ineptitude. On balance, Bacevich is probably closer to the truth, but Newhouse is valuable nonetheless for showing just how bad, even by the standards of the Clinton administration, Bush's foreign policy really is.

Newhouse, himself an official in the Clinton administration, has had a long and fruitful career shuttling between government and journalism, with a stopover at a think tank or two along the way. For many years, he wrote about foreign policy for the *New Yorker*. He issues a thoroughgoing indictment of the manner in which President Bush has conducted America's business abroad. That Newhouse himself is an establishment liberal is of little importance, because any thinking American can find much with which to agree in his case against Bush. So long as Newhouse keeps his account in the negative, he is in the right.

Newhouse devotes a chapter to each member of David Frum's "Axis of Evil." In each case, the author shows that the President has failed to capitalize on the opportunities before him—that is, when he has not actually made things worse. Often enough, in Newhouse's account, a missed opportunity is the same thing as a situation made worse—as in the case of North Korea.

The Clinton administration, toward the end, was pursuing a risky strategy of diplomatic engagement with Kim Jong Il's Stalinist state and, on Newhouse's account, was inching toward an agreement on weapons inspections and nuclear nonproliferation. This may well have been wrongheaded, but Newhouse at least provides an argument for how it could have worked. Bush, on the other hand, has not had a very clearly defined policy toward North Korea, preoccupied as he has been with looking for weapons of mass destruction on the other side of the globe. Kim Jong Il, in the meantime, has moved ahead with plans to produce highly enriched uranium that might be used in a nuclear-weapons program. And, as Newhouse points out, the War in Iraq has given Kim all the more reason to want to acquire the kind of weapons that might deter the United States from attacking him.

Citing former CIA counterterrorism chief Vincent Cannistraro, Newhouse argues that including Iran in the Axis of Evil has been counterproductive, emboldening her anti-American hardliners while undermining her moderates. Newhouse is confident that, left to her own devices, Iran will liberalize. More than 65 percent of the population is under age 30, he notes, and internet connectivity and the availability of satellite television are growing rapidly. Such things do not augur well for the clerics, who have long since worn out their welcome with the people of Iran. Moreover, says Newhouse, Iran is actually in a position to become a very useful ally of the United States, to help in combating the resurgent Taliban in Afghanistan (there is no love lost between the Taliban and Iran), and, eventually, to provide a regional check on Pakistan, a more unstable, undemocratic country than Iran—and one that has nuclear weapons. Iran, properly guided, can be a stabilizing force in the region. President Bush, however, has preferred to treat Iran as an enemy.

His chapter on Iraq recapitulates what is by now a well-known tale of inflated threat and wise counsel ignored. He has little original to add, but he still does some good by reminding the reader just how many establishment figures spoke out against the war on Iraq. Brent Scowcroft wrote an editorial saying that "an attack on Iraq at this time would seriously jeopardize, if not destroy, the global counter-terrorist campaign we have undertaken." He was far from alone. Retired Marine Corps Gen. Anthony Zinni spoke out. So did former secretary of state Lawrence Eagleburger and Nebraska Republican Sen. Chuck Hagel. George W. Bush, however, only had ears for Richard Perle and others who insisted on immediate war.

Newhouse also has a chapter on the strain that Bush's foreign policy has created between the United States and her allies, though his book opens and closes with broad treatments of the opportunities available to President Bush immediately after September 11 and those that are still present. The opening chapter, indeed, is a much-needed reminder of just how much goodwill there was toward the United States in the days and weeks following the destruction of the World Trade Center, and even following the war against the Taliban. That goodwill has since evaporated, replaced by varying degrees of anti-Americanism from Europe to the Third World. Newhouse seems to see some solipsism at work here: He notes at the end of his book that "The administration is trying to create reality, not deal with it." The joke will be on all of us if the President's folly succeeds in turning Saddam Hussein's imaginary weapons of mass destruction into somebody else's real ones. ·c·

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"Freakmag.com 'the vibe for ardent enthusiasts' is proud to announce that we have released to the Internet a New Magazine which is about being a Jesus Freak, that is an ardent enthusiast of Jesus Christ. The premier issue features an exclusive In-Depth-Interview with the Reverend Richard Weaver A.K.A. 'Handshake Man.' Richard Weaver has been covered by CNN, ABC, NBC, CBS, FOX, The Associated Press, MSNBC, Washington Post, L.A. Times, N.Y. Times, and now for the first time In-Depth only at freakmag.com."

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De Oppresso Liber

by Philip Jenkins

Bank's Bandits: The Untold Story of the Original Green Berets
by Edward F. Fitzgerald
Haverford, PA: Infinity Publishing; 453 pp., $20.95

◆

To say that Edward Fitzgerald is a retired lawyer who has written a memoir of his military experiences in the 1950's may not make his book sound at first like the most exciting literary project of the year. *Bank's Bandits* is, however, a highly readable work: a well-observed, literate, and often very funny account of recruitment and training in the original U.S. Special Forces formed during the Korean War, the 10th Special Forces Airborne Group. The book is also a helpful and evocative introduction to the Special Forces idea itself, which has done so much to revolutionize concepts of modern warfare.

At the start of the war in Afghanistan in 2001, President Bush's advisors were debating furiously whether U.S. intervention would demand "boots on the ground," an amazing notion that is used without much sense of its implications. Briefly described, the phrase suggests that wars can be won without any significant participation by ground troops, an idea that would have seemed astonishing to most generations of soldiers and planners. How can anyone win a war *without* thousands of boots in place? The new approach results, of course, from the force of modern airpower as well as from planners' fascination with small elite units who can operate behind enemy lines, often in cooperation with local rebels and militias.

The elite-force idea has its roots in the world of Lawrence of Arabia, though other important modern progenitors certainly include Waffen SS officer Otto Skorzeny, who formed and led German special forces for Hitler. (His greatest feat was the 1943 rescue of Mussolini.) Also influential were piratical British units such as the Special Air Service and the Long Range Desert Group. The U.S. tradition was represented by Col. Aaron Bank, whose unit reputedly was entrusted with a special mission to seize Hitler at Berchtesgaden. (Bank himself reported his own experiences in his 1986 book, *From OSS To Green Berets: The Birth Of Special Forces.*)

After 1945, special-forces units attracted great attention in a world in which fast-moving formations were likely to overrun fixed defenses, placing a premium on stay-behind guerrilla activities and clandestine operations. His allegiances transferred to the Anglo-American West, Skorzeny himself became a principal planner of anticommunist resistance in the event of the long-expected Soviet invasion of democratic Europe. (His 1957 memoir, *Skorzeny's Special Missions*, still repays careful reading.) By the early 1950's, elite guerrilla units were a lively force in military thinking, Western and Eastern. (The Soviets developed their own Spetznaz.)

Such lofty strategic debates had little impact on the world of Edward Fitzgerald, an early recruit to the new Airborne Group. *Bank's Bandits* can certainly be read as a romp, with its tales of Special Forces exercises in Georgia directed against the overwhelming might of the Aggressor formations—that is, the 82nd Airborne. Among the heroic victories described by Fitzgerald are the great chicken raid, which involved purloining large portions of the 82nd's dinner, and an assault in which four of his colleagues defeated and destroyed an entire camp of the regular airborne units. We also hear of special units serving as "force multipliers," organizing the activities of local militia units. In this case, though, the ragged allies are not Afghan or Kurdish tribesmen but Dixie bootleggers and moonshiners, who have signed on to the cause, together with an octogenarian veteran whose glory days were in the time of Pershing and Pancho Villa.

These chapters make for particularly lively reading, but they also show how deep-rooted are some of the issues that would bedevil the later history of Special Forces. One, of course, is the rivalry with mainstream Army units and with conventionally minded officers not prepared to tolerate the distinctive standards and behavior demanded in unconventional warfare. Issues of washing, shaving, and saluting can all incite conflict. While the officers of Bank's Bandits were praising and rewarding their men for trampling standard operating practices underfoot in order to achieve their goals, mainstream officers were threatening Special Forces with court martial for doing exactly the same thing.

We can also see the roots of the Special Forces mythology: the image of the supermen who can speak any language, deploy any weapon, and accomplish virtually anything—it seems—up to and including psychokinesis and teleportation. The origins of this myth are not hard to find. If four men arrive in the night and ruin a much larger formation, they will develop an heroic reputation; it is comforting, moreover, for ordinary civilians to believe that such supermen are, in fact, out there somewhere fighting our wars for us.

To speak of a Special Forces myth does not for a second denigrate the real achievements of such units; it does, nevertheless, encourage a critical reading of memoirs that place sole emphasis on this kind of derring-do. For some writers, mythologizing Special Forces helps defuse the horrors of combat, by de-emphasizing war as assembly-line butchery and stressing an individual heroism that recalls the knights and cavaliers of old—the "army of one" incarnate. For an understanding of the American mental attitude at the outset of the Vietnam War, the classic Western *The Magnificent Seven*, in which a handful of highly professional Americans organize a hitherto passive mass of Mexican peasants to rise up and fight off gangs of vicious bandits (who clearly symbolize the Vietcong), is invaluable. Whether in Mexico, Southeast Asia, or the Middle East, it seemed, a handful of Special Forces could work miracles: John Kennedy *loved* his Green Berets. (It is salutary to read, as a counterweight, the British mythologies of this kind discussed in John Newsinger's debunking text *Dangerous Men: The SAS and Popular Culture* .)

One of the pleasures of Fitzgerald's book is his treatment of the motivations of soldiers joining up with this or any comparable unit, their ordinariness, and the implausibility of the superman myth. We are left with an impression of intelligent, gutsy soldiers—but definitely men of this earth. Anyone wishing to understand modern warfare needs to pay full account to the Special Forces tradition. This shrewd and readable book is a valuable addition to that tradition in its literary aspect.

Philip Jenkins is the author, most recently, of Images of Terror: What We Can and Can't Know About Terrorism *(Aldine de Gruyter).*

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Custom and Ceremony

by Patrick J. Walsh

W.B. Yeats: A Life, Volume II: The Arch Poet 1915-1939
by R.F. Foster
New York: Oxford University Press; 798 pp., $40.00

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The first volume of R.F. Foster's acclaimed biography of William Butler Yeats (*The Apprentice Mage*) appeared in 1997. Yeats' son and daughter (now in their 70's) chose him to be their father's official biographer after their previous choice, F.S.L. Lyons, passed away, and Foster has been working on this project for the past 17 years. Best known for his history *Modern Ireland 1600-1972*, Foster is Carroll Professor of Irish History at Oxford. Like Yeats, Foster hails from the once-mighty Anglo-Irish Protestant Ascendancy. These people were forcibly settled in Ireland by the British Crown to keep down the wild Irish Catholics by taking their land, language, and identity. (To his great credit, Foster does not shy away from exposing Ascendancy prejudices toward the Irish people.)

Yeats was proud of his people's heritage, bragging to the Irish Senate in 1922 that the Anglo-Irish are "no petty people, we are the people of Burke; we are the people of Grattan; we are the people of Swift, the people of Emmet, the people of Parnell." The appointed Free State senator explained to Lady Gregory, "[W]e Protestants did not like to boast while we were the oppressors, of our intellectual superiority and moral courage, but now under a Catholic majority we can do so."

Richard Ellman's *Yeats: The Man and the Masks* (which Foster believes holds the field in Yeatsean biography) sought to offer the reader a whole and coherent view of the man by a study of his life and poetry. Foster employs a different method: "[M]ost biographical studies of WBY are principally about what he wrote; this one is principally about what he did." Why Foster decided on this approach is not clear. Yeats' last line from his poem "Among School Children" comes to mind: "How can we know the dancer from the dance?"

The professor seems to think that accurate and abundant chronology will somehow tell the story itself. Foster provides scarcely any analysis and no conclusion regarding his subject. Instead, he unrolls a large narrative skein from many documented sources. Paraphrasing Yeats, Foster writes, "WBY himself expected biography to happen." This one is also a good history of Ireland during its subject's lifetime (1865-1939).

Born in Dublin in 1865 to a family of clergymen,

> Yeats was four years old when Gladstone disestablished the Church of Ireland, which provided livings for many of his ancestors. He was five when the 1870 Land Act interfered with landlord's control over their property.

By the time Yeats was 21, a bill was introduced for home rule in Ireland. Ireland would soon achieve independence and join what Yeats' friend A.E. called "that half crazy Gaeldom." Foster's first volume presented an aggressive and egocentric poet unalterably determined to achieve fame. Narrating the first 50 years of Yeats' life, it covers his Celtic Twilight movement, his interest in occultism, and the founding of the Abbey Theatre. Volume II opens in 1915 with the acclaimed poet now 50 years old and takes us through the Easter Rising, Yeats' late marriage in 1917, and the episode concerning his wife's automatic writing as relayed to her by the spirit world. It moves on to the Irish Civil War, Yeats' appointment as senator in the Irish Free State, his Nobel Prize, and his death in France in 1939.

Foster gives short shrift to Yeats' *Autobiographies*, sadly missing the essential religious nature of the man. ("I am very religious, and deprived by Huxley and Tyndall of the simple minded religion of my childhood, I have made a new religion, almost an infallible church of poetic traditions.") In a letter to John O'Leary, he notes, "I have always considered myself a voice of what I believe to be a great renaissance—the revolt of the soul against the intellect now beginning in the world." Foster believes Yeats' occult interests and search for the supernatural were merely a means of finding metaphors for his poetry. Yeats, however, saw the supernatural and unseen things as essential to man's nature. He fiercely attacked the modern world and science for reducing man to a toolmaking animal with no eternal soul.

Quoting Berkeley, Yeats dismissed the materialism of the Enlightenment: "[W]e Irish do not hold this." Yeats indicted Descartes, Locke, Newton, and the scientific method for having emptied Western life of its spiritual heritage. (They took the world and "left us excrement instead.") He developed an antithesis to their scientific method.

> I began by telling people that one should believe whatever had been believed in all countries and periods and only reject any one part of it after much evidence instead of starting over again and only believing what one could prove.

Yeats hoped that Ireland, in his day unaffected (as he saw it) by the forces of materialism, would bring about a restoration of European civilization. "Here will be an imaginative culture and power to understand spiritual things." G.K. Chesterton, a friend, said that he preferred Yeats' Celtic Twilight to the Materialistic Midnight. Yeats would become sorely disappointed in Ireland, however, and his later poetry expresses this disillusionment. Believing that our civilization was finished, he consoled himself to sing in "tragic joy." With the help of Ezra Pound, Yeats emerged fully from the romantic mists of the Celtic Twilight with a lithe, lean, classical style.

Patrick Kavanagh, the greatest Irish poet since Yeats, recognized that the Celtic Twilight "was a means of providing irish protestants who were worried about being 'irish' with an artificial country" and pointed out that "literature has to do with sincerity and not nationality." It is a tribute to Yeats' genius that he learned to write out of his and his people's experience in Ireland. His later poems express the dignified viewpoint of an Anglo-Irish aristocrat.

Yet Foster does not fully appreciate the unique vantage point provided by the dying Anglo-Irish order. Yeats straddled two worlds, being accepted neither by the English as English nor by the Irish as Irish—a kind of orphan child of British imperialism. His displacement gave him a sense of loss, an appreciation of the past, and a powerful prophetic vision. He described his epoch as anarchic, a "numb nightmare," and saw "confusion fall upon our thought." The progressive degradation has continued apace, so that, in the 21st century, poor confusion has no thought left to fall upon. Through this

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chaos, as Cleanth Brooks said, "Yeats courageously asserted the power of the human spirit against the spiritual and intellectual corruption of our time."

Yeats became a kind of Prospero of his own people's lost grandeur. He purchased a medieval tower in the Irish countryside and summoned his people—Goldsmith, Swift, Burke, and Berkeley—and in "The Seven Sages," condemned our time as all "Whiggery" (or liberalism): "A levelling, rancorous, rational sort of mind / That never looked out of the eye of the saint / Or out of a drunkard's eye."

It is a shame that Foster does not make a deeper examination of the poetry itself. His separation of the poet from his poetry and his restricted view of the poems in their "immediate historical context" is not the way to approach any poet—particularly not Yeats. Poets, by the very nature of their work, transcend time. The Greeks were careful to distinguish *chronos* (time) from the eternal *kairos*, which they strove to touch through ceremony. Yeats, too, throughout his life struggled to reconnect time with eternity and make sense of our human predicament.

When Foster offers comment on Yeats' poems, he fails miserably. He attributes Yeats' "The Second Coming" to the "doubts and feelings of a generation at a moment of flux." Faced with the collapse of civilization (of which World Wars I and II were only symptoms), Yeats longed for "a ceremony of innocence" worthy of the human soul. Although he was not a professed Christian, "The Second Coming" brings about a remarkable restoration of meaning to worn Christian images and a frightening view of a post-Christian future. ("What rough beast slouches towards Bethlehem to be born?")

Of Yeats' masterful "Prayer to My Daughter," in which the words *custom* and *ceremony* appear three times each in the last stanza, Foster says,

> This use of language is a Renaissance style archaism, the sentiments, as well as the formality of language and the structure should be read in terms of the belief (which currently possessed him) that his daughter represented the incarnation of a 17th century countess of the House of Ormond.

Foster misses the point of this prayer that the purified soul, through some abiding ceremony, may survive and transcend the vicissitudes of time. "How but in custom and in ceremony / Are innocence and beauty born?"

Foster's remarks on Yeats' poetry reflect the thought of most modern academic poets who reject metaphysical vision. For them, words have no transcendent meaning. Such poets have reviewed this book favorably.

Though a member of what Lady Gregory called the "Connacht peasantry," I long ago took the oath pronounced in his last poem, "Under Ben Bulben": "Sing whatever is well made / Scorn the sort now growing up / All out of shape from toe to top."

Patrick J. Walsh has a postgraduate diploma in Anglo/Irish literature from Trinity College, Dublin, and served as chief secretary and attaché at the U.S. embassy there during President Reagan's second term.

I Just *Did* Say That!

by Peter J. Lynch

You Can't Say That! The Growing Threat to Civil Liberties From Antidiscrimination Laws
by David E. Bernstein
Washington, D.C.: Cato Institute; 197 pp., $20.00

◆

A Miller Brewing Company executive is fired for retelling a racy segment of a *Seinfeld* episode at the watercooler. An unwed teacher successfully sues the parochial school that fired her for becoming pregnant out of wedlock, despite being contractually obligated to serve as a Christian role model for her students. Nominally Catholic Georgetown University is coerced by the threat of costly lawsuits into funding homosexual student groups. These are just a few of the examples of civil-liberties violations provided by David Bernstein in *You Can't Say That!*, an important study of the infringements on First Amendment freedoms by antidiscrimination laws.

Bernstein, an associate professor of law at George Mason University, traces the origins of these laws to the civil-rights movement, and the landmark 1964 Civil Rights Act in particular. Through this act, and later legislation such as the Fair Housing Act, legislators unwittingly presented judges with a means to undermine the First Amendment; with the passage of time, other minority groups clamored for the protection of these laws. As the American elite became increasingly preoccupied with the notion that no member of any minority group should be discriminated against or allowed to suffer even the merest slight, legislatures began to create—and judges, to interpret—laws to prevent discrimination against all kinds of groups, including the overweight, the pierced, and unmarried cohabitants. As a result, in some jurisdictions, a gym may not use advertisements mocking heavy people to make its pitch; an employer cannot refuse to hire people that have various metal objects affixed to their faces; and a landlord is unable to reject tenants on the grounds that their living situation is morally repugnant.

All of this illustrates the inescapable fact that antidiscrimination laws often conflict directly with the First Amendment. The right not to be offended or discriminated against can only come at the expense of others' rights to free speech and association. In their zeal to realize the promise of equality, the majority of those responsible for antidiscrimination laws have not foreseen the myriad ways in which those laws would be misapplied. In the case of other proponents of such measures, suppression of free speech is intentional. Bernstein briefly introduces his readers to a cabal of radical feminists, "critical race theorists," and other hard-core leftist academics who are openly hostile to the First Amendment, which for them represents "a barrier to the government's ability to pursue sexual and racial equality." For these scholars (among them such notables as Catharine MacKinnon and Stanley Fish), "equality" is an imperative justifying any means used to achieve it, including overriding the Bill of Rights. In the hands of liberal elites, antidiscrimination law becomes an effective tool, wielded not just to thwart individuals with heterodox opinions but to achieve a broader goal: the reengineering of society to conform to their utopian vision. The November 2003 ruling of the Massachusetts State Supreme Court on "same-sex marriage" is a prime example of this.

Bernstein, while pointing out well-documented and oft-decried instances of political correctness run amok (*e.g.*, the notorious campus speech codes that prohibit "hate speech"), also shines the spotlight on some lesser-known cases,

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such as the abuse of the Fair Housing Act (a 1968 addendum to the original Civil Rights Act) by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. "[D]uring the Clinton administration," he claims, "HUD was the federal agency that most consistently violated civil liberties on behalf of an antidiscrimination agenda." Bernstein cites several cases in which HUD, under the auspices of the Fair Housing Act and working in conjunction with the Department of Justice, attempted to suppress neighborhood associations that had peacefully organized and protested the government's plans. HUD's response was to try to force recalcitrant individuals and organizations to express views that met with HUD approval by offering a "conciliation agreement" that would allow the offending party to escape litigation. These agreements included provisions that compelled the public expression of views diametrically opposed to those they had expressed before the government crackdown.

We might expect that, in the struggle to preserve constitutional freedoms from self-righteous bureaucrats, the American Civil Liberties Union would declare itself unequivocally on the side of civil liberties. This is not always the case: Bernstein points to a number of occasions when the ACLU has either been indifferent to, or even actively worked to subvert, the defense of civil liberties. *Boy Scouts of America* v. *Dale* is just one example of the ACLU's failure to live up to its name. The ACLU took up the cause of James Dale, the New Jersey assistant scoutmaster expelled in 1990 for his open homosexuality. Dale sued the Boy Scouts for violating his civil rights; under Title II of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, discrimination by private entities is prohibited if they are found to provide "public accommodations." The Boy Scouts refuted the claim that they provide public accommodations and argued that, as a private organization, they have a constitutionally protected right to establish their own membership criteria. Fortunately, the Supreme Court decided on the side of freedom of association. Yet the ACLU, despite its failure in *Dale*, continues to agitate against allowing the Boy Scouts to use publicly funded facilities.

In the 20th century, the United States experienced an almost unremitting increase in the power and scope of government at all levels. In this, the federal government led the way, assuming broad powers—often in times of national crisis—that could not be justified by any honest interpretation of the Constitution; state and local governments followed suit and encroached further upon the lives of the citizenry. Antidiscrimination laws are just one example of the public sphere enveloping the ever-shrinking private one. Bernstein never clearly and forcefully condemns the proliferation of government regulations that, in themselves, lead inevitably to excessive litigiousness and curtailment of freedom. Nevertheless, he demonstrates full understanding of the libertarian dilemma: In the pursuit of liberty for all, the profane must receive the same treatment from the law as the sacred. Bernstein acknowledges that "asking Americans to display a measure of fortitude in the face of offense and discrimination is asking for a lot. But in the end, it is a small price to pay for preserving civil liberties."

True enough; for, if the seemingly innocuous Fair Housing Act can be used to trample rights protected by the First Amendment, what effect may the PATRIOT Act be expected to have?

Peter J. Lynch writes from Alexandria, Virginia.

Three Against the World

by Catharine Savage Brosman

Tocqueville, Lieber, and Bagehot: Liberalism Confronts the World
by David Clinton
New York: Palgrave Macmillan; 159 pp., $55.00

◆

In the political writings of Alexis de Tocqueville (1805-1859), Francis Lieber (1798-1872), and Walter Bagehot (1826-1877), we find insights, opinions, and warnings of great current applicability, especially with regard to international affairs. The task Professor David Clinton sets himself in this excellent study is not, however, primarily to draw conclusions concerning the present but to analyze each thinker's views on international questions of his time. Following a solid Introduction, three chapters ("Why did M. Tocqueville Change His Mind?," "Why did Professor Lieber say No?," and "Why was Mr. Bagehot Opposed?") define the positions each man took on pressing issues. The differences among them are brought out in the conclusion, which is also the occasion for the author to distinguish between his subjects' views and the dogma of 21st-century liberalism and globalization.

The term *liberalism*, as Professor Clinton employs it, indicates the championing of liberty, at home and perhaps abroad. In an international connection, the term stands in contradistinction to *realism* or *neorealism*—illustrated most famously by Bismarck. What is proper, what is feasible in this liberal enterprise is, of course, the great question, especially (as the author remarks) given the distaste historical liberalism has shown for coercion and its concern for private life. Neither Tocqueville, Lieber, nor Bagehot was an unqualified liberal, though all three supported individual liberties, limited government, and the rule of law; all tempered their positions with "realist" qualifications. None had, moreover, a primary interest in international politics, yet each gave theoretical as well as practical consideration to the topic. To some degree, the positions of each man mirror the circumstances of his native (or adopted) country, although not rigidly.

The French sociologist was concerned with preservation of republican, but not radical, government in France and with his nation's prestige and stability, both being necessary for the advancement of liberal society. Judging the spread of democracy to be both desirable and inevitable in the wake of the French Revolution, Tocqueville was mindful of the threat posed to it by extreme egalitarianism on the one hand and rigid class structure on the other. The grounding of democracy must be, he thought, civic virtue. America illustrated such virtue, particularly on the local plane, where Tocqueville admired pragmatic problem-solving; but she also exemplified the dangers of excessive individualism and egalitarianism. The pursuit of individualism, especially where directed toward material benefits, weakens the citizenry's determination to protect its liberties; and excessive concern with equality, he believed, would lead to stultifying uniformity and erode the very entity (the nation-state) charged with protecting freedom.

Whereas Tocqueville had been ready, as a new legislator in 1839, to take on any foreign adversary (chiefly as a means of affirming nationhood by upholding

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honor or "national passions"), ten years later, as foreign minister under the Second Republic, he was fully converted to the cause of international peace and the quiet resolution of disputes. He saw an enormous advantage to the American republic in geographical separation—especially when contrasted with the proximity of the European nations to one another. Yet national sovereignty—and, hence, patriotic ardor—remained primary for Tocqueville. A "vaguely beneficent attitude toward the whole of humanity" (the phrase is Professor Clinton's) should not be allowed to replace loyalty to home, place, or language. What, then, could encourage virtue and contribute to human freedom (without resort to demagoguery) on the international plane? Since Tocqueville feared a loss of national authority (he believed that the legitimacy of treating the nationals of other states differently from one's own had been undermined already), mutual agreement among states on standards of acceptable national conduct was the only means. He urged especially a greater understanding between France and England, the two major liberal powers.

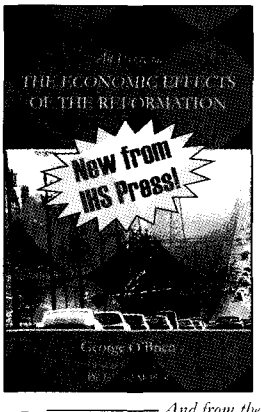
Francis Lieber was more nationalistic still than Tocqueville. A Prussian who emigrated to America in 1827, lived in Boston, and taught for many years at South Carolina College before moving to New York, Lieber believed that "life, all conscious existence, turns on the two poles of Individualism and Socialism [social bonds]." The American union was not only good in itself but showed how freedom (individual interests) could be extended by means of voluntary association among states, to which they adhere through honor. He campaigned actively for international agreements in such areas as weights and measures, coinage, copyright law, free trade, and rules governing the conduct of war, one of his principal interests. (Lieber was chiefly responsible for drawing up the "instructions for the government of armies" known as General Orders Number 100, 1863.)

Yet he concluded that the natural (to him) bonds of society could not be extended to the universal plane without jeopardizing rights; thus, he unequivocally opposed a proposed international court with punitive powers (1872) and the creation of any supranational institution, or "Universal empire," charged with enforcing them. Lieber ardently supported the cause of German unification. For the sake of national stability, he opposed extending the franchise, as it would give effective control to the working class, and he favored prohibiting immigration by non-Europeans to America. His concept of national sovereignty implied even the right to overrule custom and violate international usages—and perhaps wage war—as "necessity" might dictate, since the responsibility of the state is to look after its own interests. "Self-preservation alone forces at times a state to interfere with the affairs of another." More than his strong dislike of slavery, his fervent belief in national integrity as a means of preserving both liberty and society explains his condemnation of secession in 1861 and his enthusiastic support of the Union.

Bagehot, the author of *The English Constitution* and editor of the *Economist*, held views that are particularly relevant today. These include his opposition to foreign entanglements and political crusades (notably in the Near East), his distrust of zealotry, and his support of a reduction in public expenditures. They represent not insularity but a reasoned position, taking into account the international scene and Great Britain's particular situation. Reason was, indeed, Bagehot's political creed; through political evolution, he believed, a few advanced states had abandoned the policies of coercion (by sheer power and the weight of tradition) in favor of enlightened discussion. This belief in government by discussion (the parliamentary process supported by free journalism) made him wary of any supranational enterprises even in the cause of freedom, since the extension of enlightened discussion and sound judgment seemed to him utopian, given the "inconsideration" of human beings, vast differences among societies (few of which were ready for parliamentary government), and the persistence of power politics (exemplified by Bismarck and Napoleon III). Similarly, Bagehot opposed extension of the franchise by lowering property qualifications, as this reform would place decisionmaking in the hands of those ill-equipped to evaluate arguments. His liberalism was thus well dosed with what Professor Clinton terms an "essentially conservative mistrust of the human ability to alter complex realities for the better."

Joined in the "liberal project of preserving the freedom of the individual within a workable social framework," these three thinkers agreed also in warning, well over a century ago, against the transfer of national loyalties to a global community. Under such a scheme, they argued, civic virtues could no longer be sustained, and, thus, freedom of the human spirit would be lost. Few lessons more pertinent to the 21st century can easily be imagined.

Catharine Savage Brosman, professor emerita of French at Tulane University and honorary research professor at the University of Sheffield, has published numerous works of poetry and prose, including Visions of War in France: Fiction, Art, Ideology *(LSU Press).*



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by Samuel Francis

Amnesty

Conservatives who saw through the fraud of the "temporary worker visa" program that President Bush unveiled in January and recognized it for the mass amnesty of illegal aliens it is might want to consider muting their fulminations against the concept of amnesty. If current demographic trends continue, they may find that they are in need of a little amnesty themselves once the country comes under the control of the new population that uncontrolled immigration is importing. Mr. Bush, of course, believes he can have the conservatives and the immigrants, too, and he is probably right about the former, despite their distaste for his proposal.

The political motivations of the Bush plan were transparent from the moment the President chose to announce it. It was the first major proposal issued by the White House in an election year, was largely the design of the President's major political advisor Karl Rove, and was unbosomed at a White House ceremony to which only Hispanic leaders of Hispanic political organizations—the Hispanic Alliance for Progress, the Association for the Advancement of Mexican Americans, the Latino Coalition, and the League of United Latin American Citizens—were invited (aside from the obligatory Cabinet members, staffers, and tame congressmen). The plan incorporates almost every myth, fable, cliché, and outright lie about immigration in which the American mind has been pickled over the last 30 years, and the President himself in his brief remarks managed to repeat several of them: We are a nation of immigrants; America is based on a proposition; we need immigrants to do the jobs Americans will not take; Hispanic immigrants have strong family values. Unlike President Clinton—who, in controversial remarks about immigration at Portland State University a few years ago, emphasized the need for immigrants to assimilate—Mr. Bush issued no such encouragement. He was emphatic, however, in insisting that the plan he had just proposed was not amnesty. "I oppose amnesty, placing undocumented workers on the automatic path to citizenship." That, of course, is not quite what amnesty is, but that Mr. Bush's characterization of his plan was not accurate is clear once you look at the details. In fact, the amnesty it offers is the least of its problems.

The President's plan issues three-year "temporary work visas" to all "undocumented workers" already in the country. (The President used the euphemism that the left has, for several years, demanded replace *illegal aliens*; the latter expression, entirely accurate, is supposed to be too harsh and suggests that the laws they break to come here are legitimate.) The visas can then be extended for (presumably) another three years, after which the aliens will be eligible to apply for permanent legal residency, which is the road to full citizenship. As the President stated, "Some temporary workers will make the decision to pursue American citizenship. Those who make this choice will be allowed to apply in the normal way."

Supposedly, the plan contains incentives for the aliens to return to their home countries—they can pay into tax-preferred savings accounts and the Social Security system and will be eligible for benefits from it as well as from the retirement systems of their own countries. This will allow them to build "a small nest egg," which "is necessary to start their own business, or buy some land for their family." That part of the plan is also a lie, though whether Mr. Bush expects it to fool the immigrants or Americans is not clear. It is preposterous to claim that benefits from any retirement system that the largely unskilled workers would acquire after working for only three (or six) years are enough to start a small business or buy land. Americans may believe that, but no worker, documented or not, does.

The amnesty the President's plan offers consists of a legal road to citizenship for people who are now in this country illegally and who take part in the Temporary Worker Visa Program. It does, in fact, place "undocumented workers on the automatic path to citizenship" if they choose to walk up (or down) that path. The "incentives" the plan offers to return to their miserable, economically backward, corrupt, and often repressive or anarchic countries are a joke, compared to the opportunity to remain in this country legally forever. Why would they not choose to walk toward legal citizenship?

Yet the amnesty the plan offers is not the worst feature of it. Not only are all illegal aliens currently in the United States (the President used the figure 8 million, which is arguable, but other estimates place the number as high as 11 million) eligible to take part in the plan if they meet the few conditions (they must have a job in this country, it cannot be a job an American wants, and they have to abide by the law and the rules of the program), but any alien at all, anywhere in the world, can also take part in the Temporary Worker Visa Program. As Mr. Bush described the plan,

> This program will offer legal status, as temporary workers, to the millions of undocumented men and women now employed in the United States, and to those in foreign countries who seek to participate in the program and have been offered employment here.

The foreigners who are not already here must have a job offer and must enter legally (though why they have to, when illegal aliens already here did not, isn't clear). Other than those meager stipulations, there is no reason anyone—and everyone—in the rest of the world cannot invite himself to this country and contrive to stay for the rest of his life. Forget amnesty: What Mr. Bush's plan does, in effect, is repeal every one of our current laws against immigration, period.

Given the speed and sophistication of global communications today, there is every reason to expect international job banks to be established (if they do not already exist) that will notify "workers" in Nigeria, Afghanistan, Myanmar, and everywhere else of "jobs" available to them

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in the United States. Once they can arrange an "offer" from an "employer" (in return, if needed, for a healthy fee), all they will need to arrive here will be the plane ticket. Once here, there is no reason they would ever leave.

For all the obsession with "counterterrorism" and "national security" the Bush administration has displayed in the last few years, it is remarkable that the President never even mentioned the security aspects of his plan. What, in the arrangements he described, would prevent a member of Al Qaeda or any other terrorist, subversive, or criminal organization from finding himself a job "offer" in the United States and entering the country through the program? It is hard enough now (in fact impossible) to screen the million or more legal immigrants who arrive every year plus all the foreign visitors, students, businessmen, *etc.*, who come here. With the massive flood of alien workers who will apply for "temporary work visas" under the President's plan, national-security procedures as well as current immigration laws will be effectively repealed.

It may be that, if and when the plan comes before Congress, and if and when it actually progresses toward enactment, someone will have enough sense to address and amend some of these flaws, but, if they are adequately addressed and remedied, there will not be much left of what Mr. Bush proposed. In any case, from the very moment of its birth, enactment seemed unlikely.

The Democrats at once denounced Mr. Bush's brainstorm as inadequate and insufficient, since it failed to offer full citizenship on the spot to illegal aliens. They have no intention of letting the Republicans claim credit for an amnesty plan and indebting the next generation of the vast Hispanic voting bloc to the GOP. The Democrats will oppose the plan in Congress, and, if the Republicans actually manage to push it toward passage, they will try to stick in killer amendments that would either allow their own party to claim credit for amnesty or ensure that the plan would die in its legislative cradle.

As for the Republicans and their faithful conservative companions, they, for once, saw through what Mr. Bush was up to. The immediate response from "movement conservatives" in Washington was negative. *Human Events*, the American Conservative Union, the *Washington Times*, and even *National Review* all frowned on the plan. In Arizona, where illegal immigration has become such a threat to American ranchers and homeowners that citizens' organizations have formed to police the border themselves, an angry crowd of protestors greeted Rep. Jim Kolbe, a supporter of the Bush plan, with a load of garbage dumped on their property by illegal alien trespassers. The National Border Patrol Council, an organization representing 9,000 of the U.S. Border Patrol's nonsupervisory agents, called the plan a "slap in the face to anyone who has ever tried to enforce the immigration laws of the United States" and vowed opposition to it. Polls showed that more than 50 percent of the public, and well more than that among Republicans, opposed the plan, and, by the time Mr. Bush delivered the State of the Union Address two weeks after announcing it, it was clear that the "guest worker program" had backfired badly. He skimmed over his reference to it quickly, to muted applause from the GOP faithful.

There were some who supported the plan, however, and they were neither the predictable Big Business lackeys who embraced it because of the promised army of cheap and docile labor nor Hispanic voters dazzled by the generosity and tolerance the Republicans had displayed but the neoconservatives, the same crowd of heavy-lifter superpatriots who have been crowing over the triumph of Democracy in Iraq, demanding more war everywhere, and spying out the antisemites amongst anyone who disagrees. Thus John Podhoretz, son of neocon guru Norman "World War IV" Podhoretz, enthusiastically praised the President's plan in his column in the *New York Post*.

Mr. Podhoretz hailed the plan as a "far-reaching, innovative and compassionate revision of American immigration policy." He liked it in part because of all its warm and fuzzy benefits for aliens but also and mainly because the plan would "transform not only the political debate in the United States but the Republican Party as well."

Mr. Podhoretz was by no means the only neoconservative to slobber over the plan—almost at once and with one voice other neocons such as Linda Chavez, Jack Kemp, Jonah Goldberg, David Horowitz, Suzanne Fields, David Brooks in the *New York Times*, and Tamar Jacoby in the *Wall Street Journal*, as well as the *Weekly Standard*, endorsed the plan, even as paleoconservatives were rejecting it—but he was by far the most frank in praising it for the political damage it would inflict on real American conservatism.

Mr. Podhoretz's argument was that the Republican Party, since the time of its support for the 1924 immigration law that established quotas to preserve the historic ethnic composition of the United States, has been "anti-immigrant," and, if that means supportive of measures that restrict immigration, he is correct. In the 1990's, he notes,

> a sustained argument against immigration was being waged by certain conservative intellectuals—ranging from the respectable precincts of *National Review* to the hatemongering nativism growing like fetid algae in the Pat Buchanan fever swamps.

It is this orientation of the Republican Party and this "sustained argument against immigration" that Mr. Podhoretz (and, I daresay, the rest of the neocon mafia) believes the President's plan will "transform" right out of the party and out of mainstream politics altogether.

Mr. Podhoretz is for the Bush plan and for mass immigration in general because he knows it will fracture the United States so seriously that anything like the "fever swamps" of the populist right and any other expression of authentic conservatism will dry up. Mr. Podhoretz's hearty embrace of the immigration plan and the reasons he offers for embracing it are strikingly reminiscent of a sentiment I quoted in this column a few months ago, from former Brandeis University president Earl Raab. Speaking of the impact of immigration on national politics, Mr. Raab opined that "We have tipped beyond the point where a Nazi-Aryan party will be able to prevail in this country." Neoconservatives, in other words, support mass immigration because it prevents forces they regard as "Nazi-Aryan" or "hate-mongering nativism" from mobilizing any serious political influence. And they may be correct that mass immigration has had or will have that effect.

Judging by the anger the President's amnesty plan engendered among almost all other Americans, however, the transformation of the Republican Party that the plan will provoke may not be exactly what Mr. Podhoretz and his neocon cronies are expecting, much less one they would welcome. ·c

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by Scott P. Richert

This Is the Time to Remember

Every city is made up of innumerable stories, some overlapping, most not. And, thus, every city needs many storytellers to provide a full account of its life, because—humans being finite—no one is likely to be able to encompass all of those stories in his work. Few cities, however, are so lucky. The best most cities of any size can hope for is an Anthony Bukoski, who knows the East End of Superior, Wisconsin, as intimately as he knows himself—knows the people, the places, the history, even the way that both the physical and the human landscape of the East End change with every change of the seasons. For a city to have a second Bukoski would be a gift beyond imagining, and it would require an extraordinary people to be worthy of such a blessing.

These thoughts ran through my mind on the night of February 6, when, at the generous invitation of Alberto Altamore, more than 100 people from across Rockford gathered at Altamore Ristorante to mourn the passing of radio talk-show host Chris Bowman and to celebrate the life of a man who, over the past decade, was perhaps less of a storyteller himself than an editor and publisher of other people's stories—the people in that room, and many more besides. Rockford has not yet been blessed with even one Tony Bukoski, but, in the hands of Chris Bowman, the stories of these people had burst the bounds of their private lives and been woven together in a tapestry—incomplete, yes, and even a bit ragged, but that's a pretty good description of Rockford itself.

Many of us gathered there that night first came to knew Chris during the 12-year-long struggle against federal-court control of the Rockford school district—Mary Hitchcock, the founder of Rockford Educating All Children (R.E.A.CH.) and Barb Dent, her successor as R.E.A.CH. chairman; Ted Biondo, Stephanie Caltagerone, Dave Strommer, and Patti Delugas, all school-board members during the height of the battle over court-ordered taxation (ultimately declared unconstitutional) to pay for the elaborate social-engineering scheme that resulted from the lawsuit filed by a group perversely known as People Who Care; activists Bill Megan, Sr., and Bill Megan, Jr., Mark and CeCe Dahlgren, and Dick Kuberka, the unofficial historian of the desegregation suit; and many others who spent countless nights at school-board meetings and days collecting tax protests and, of course, calling Chris's show to discuss the latest developments.

Chris played a pivotal role in *Chronicles*' involvement in the battle over judicial taxation. Twenty-one years after John Howard founded The Rockford Institute, the Institute remained better known in London than in its hometown. Tom Fleming put the Institute and *Chronicles* on the local map with his February 1997 *Perspective* "Here Come the Judge," but it was Chris who distributed the updated map all over town when he read Tom's words on the air. Over the next seven years, Tom would become one of Chris's most-frequent (and most-favorite) guests, commenting on everything from local politics and national culture to foreign policy and international affairs. And Chris hosted both of The Rockford Institute's local forums on judicial taxation, in February of 1997 and 1998.

When the local Gannett paper, the *Rockford Register Star*, which officially supported the school-desegregation lawsuit, grew alarmed over the incipient tax rebellion and decided to kill the messenger, running an unprecedented two-day front-page series accusing the Institute of racism, Chris turned the airwaves over to Tom for days on end to defend our position. A moderately conservative Republican himself (in the 1980's, he had been chief of staff to Illinois Congresswoman Lynn Martin, deputy executive director of the National Republican Congressional Committee, and political director of the Republican National Committee), Chris did not agree with all of our positions (he was, for instance, never pro-life, though, in recent years, he had begun to have his doubts about the pro-abortion position), but he realized that the Institute and *Chronicles*—unlike the "local" daily—shared his devotion to his hometown, and that was enough to command his loyalty.

Chris's devotion to Rockford was evident in his decision, after a decade in Washington, D.C., to return to his hometown and begin a career in radio. Over the years, he was repeatedly condemned as a "naysayer," even by some (such as *Register Star* political editor Chuck Sweeny) who now find that label attached to themselves. If Chris's daily program often came across as negative, however, it was because, through his criticisms of local politicians, developers, and businessmen, he was calling on all Rockfordians to make his hometown—suffering from the identity crisis that has afflicted working-class cities across the Midwestern Rust Belt—the kind of city he remembered from his childhood. If anything, Chris was too much of an idealist, often allowing himself to be talked into supporting ballot proposals and programs—such as the open-ended one-cent sales-tax increase in 2002 to build a new jail for Winnebago County—that he later realized worked against his vision for Rockford. He always tried to make good on his mistakes, however. His devotion to the fight last fall to protect St. Mary's Oratory from the grasping hands of county-board members and officials, for instance, was fueled by his sense of betrayal over the way the jail tax was being used.

When we first introduced this column in *Chronicles* (as a "Letter From Rockford" written by Chris's friend and sometime competitor Frank Schier, the editor and publisher of the weekly *Rock River Times*), we asked Chris to write for us. A busy man, he never did, but, when the column fell to me, I often turned to his show for inspiration. In our last chat, just two days before he fell ill and another three before he passed away, he urged me to devote my March column to the Rockford Area Chamber of Commerce's "One Region, Four Rivers" initiative. "Go get 'em," he said, before he abruptly signed off, without saying goodbye.

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—From the Introduction by William Murchison of the *Dallas Morning News*

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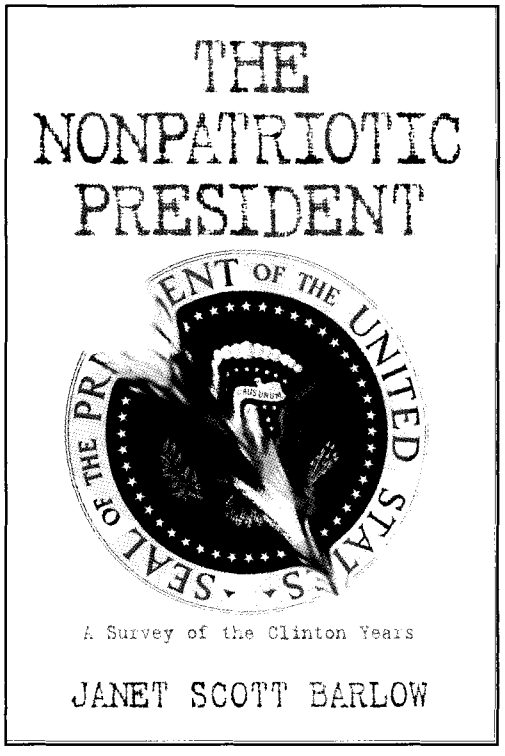

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by Andrei Navrozov

Genetic Roulette

Once, a long time ago, when, as a result of one of those complex misunderstandings that cast long shadows over the course of my life, I was getting married in a small town in Connecticut, my father showed up at the church stuffed with promotional literature. This consisted of leaflets describing his new organization, donation forms, photocopies of articles in the press—in short, everything that anyone who has ever come near political activism in the United States would find painfully familiar. It was meant to be what they call a big wedding, and my father did not want to miss the chance to work over a large audience of potential supporters. Moments before the ceremony, my best man stood him against a wall, frisked him, and confiscated all his literature, a procedure to which he submitted peaceably, though with a yellowish glint in his eyes. Hidden in the trunk of my mother's car was a fresh load.

Next scene, London. Whenever we used to run into each other at parties, the writer Taki would always call out to me across a crowded room: "Navrozov, but are you a serious person?" This was in memory of an afternoon he once spent in conversation with my father, some 30 years ago in New York, not long after we had arrived from Moscow. Taki was moonlighting for the CIA, and that day's assignment was to debrief my father. They strolled back and forth in front of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, talking Brezhnev, Solzhenitsyn, and whatever else clever people talked about in those balmy days, when suddenly my father followed his interlocutor's gaze and realized that the intrepid agent of Western intelligence was staring at the legs of a distinctly female passerby, utterly oblivious to what he was telling him. "Taki," my father said, "but are you a serious person?"

Not long ago, Taki—who has since become a multimillionaire, in the only way there has ever been of becoming one without losing one's individuality, to say nothing of one's sense of smell—found me drinking in the company of a mutual friend, Natasha G——, at a watering hole run down the road from Harry's Bar. "He's in a horrible mood," she had whispered to me. "He's been in Aspinalls two nights running, and he's down £250,000." "Ah, Navrozov!" exclaimed Taki as he joined us, perhaps just a shade more melancholy than usual. "But are you a serious person?" A short time later, the Russian photographer Gusov, my distinguished collaborator on *Italian Carousel* and now the third incorrigible gambler at the table, sat down with us and received the same whispered confidence from Natasha.

That very second, with the tact endemic to our race and his social circle, Gusov slapped Taki on the shoulder and bellowed: "Come on, Taki! Don't worry about so little thing!" Then, to Taki's visible puzzlement, "OK, you lose £250,000, but you rich man. I lose £250,000, too, but I'm poor photographer! They take my house now. My wife, she left me. My credit cards, they say they'll call a police. But I play. Any way, I play! I play if I have to take pictures at children birthdays! I play if I still have last pound in my pocket! In Napoleon Casino, Leicester Square, I give you address, people can play with just pound, you know. You still have pound, right, or Natasha is buying dinner? And you upset! Come on, Taki. You writer, not some kind of business world machine animal worm!" He went on and on with these syntactically imperfect admonishments, always in the same autobiographical vein.

"Now *that*," Taki said to me as the party was breaking up, "is a serious person."

The other night, drinking at Annabel's until closing, we again recall Gusov and his impassioned tirade. I tell Taki that my friend has since gone bankrupt, having lost every penny to the roulette tables of London's seediest gaming clubs, noting that his attitude to the destiny of the gambler has not become any the less messianic. And he has fallen in love with an Italian woman, who has left her husband, Prince T——, a member of one of the world's most prominent banking families, for a glimpse of that destiny. He lives from one day to the next, gambling whenever some cash, all too often of the hard-earned kind but preferably not, finds its way into the frayed pockets of his corduroy trousers. He lives, in short, as an artist ought to live, on love and illusions.

And something else has happened. After some 20 years of inconsolable longing for motherhood, the faery princess in the mad Russian's life is now pregnant with his child. Is this not a suitable reason for more autobiographical bellowing of the pauper-to-prince, or Gusov-to-Taki, kind? But, more to the point, is this not the supreme vindication of the animating principle of roulette, where prayers are always answered, though not in your own words, and miracles do happen, provided you dare not expect them? The term *genetic roulette* has long been established, after all, in the vocabulary of popular science. We are all of us the offspring of those who have gambled with love.

"When I was poor," Taki muses, "my playing made much more sense. Aspinalls made more sense. Now it's pure ego. No, I agree with you, roulette is not a game for rich people. It's a game for desperate people." For *serious* people, to use that favorite phrase of his, for people like Gusov and my father. For it is hard not to see a fundamental kinship in the obsessive worldviews of these two men, one a bankrupt gambler and the other an emigré writer who believes that his only son's wedding in a bucolic corner of northeastern Connecticut is a suitable opportunity for launching a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization with the stated purpose of saving Western culture from totalitarian peril.

The longer I live, the more occasions I find to ask myself whether I have inherited my father's obsessive gene in its pure form: "Am I a serious person?" It is not a facetious question, nor one that is easily answered in the ordinary circumstances of urban existence. Sometimes one can get lucky and obtain a definitive answer while taking a headlong plunge into politics, or religion, or some other obsession long on the stamina and short on the money. Sometimes one needs to spend a few years in the armed forces or at the gaming tables, where one's mettle is tested to the breaking point.

Sometimes one just has to fall in love. c

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Letter From Moscow

by Curtis Cate

Gigantic in Everything

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When you visit a foreign capital for the first time, sooner or later you are likely to be asked the question: "What do you think of our country?" or "What is your impression of this city?" In St. Petersburg, which I had visited in May, I had a ready answer: Everything there (the worst as well as the best) struck me as being monumental. But when, a few weeks later, I reached Moscow, I had to find something even more superlative to describe my sense of awe, admiration, and surprise. I summed up my mixed feelings in a standard reply, to the effect that I was "*sovsyem srazhyon gromadnym razmahom*"—"utterly overwhelmed by the massive dimensions" of Russia's capital city.

I have traveled enough around the continent of Europe to be able to say, I think with reasonable accuracy, that there is nothing quite like it and that, in terms of size and urban sprawl, Moscow dwarfs every other European capital. Berlin, with its ten-kilometer-long extension of Unter den Linden, which stretches from the Brandenburg Gate past the Tiergarten all the way to the suburb of Charlottenburg and beyond, has exactly one long thoroughfare wide enough to accommodate eight lanes of traffic. Moscow has more than half a dozen, which radiate out like giant arteries in all directions from the vicinity of the Kremlin: like the prestigious Tverskaya Ulitsa, which extends almost without a curve all the way to Tver, 120 miles away, and even on to Petersburg beyond; or the broad thoroughfare that bears the proud name of Field Marshal Prince Kutuzov, which takes you due west past the forested village of Peredelkino (where Boris Pasternak had his modest, chalet-style *dacha*) and, later, past the far more fashionable suburban village of Zhukovka, where the *bolshiye shishki* ("big shots") of present-day Russia now have or are building their country houses in well-guarded woodlands presently valued at $40,000 per *sotka* (the standard 100-meter-square plot used here in real-estate transactions).

Indeed, to find something similar to Moscow in terms of metropolitan dimensions, you have to leave the Continent and look to a city such as Los Angeles—which, unlike Moscow, has no clearly defined center but covers an urban area as large as Holland.

The Russians have a lovely word for broad—*shiroki*—which also carries the characteristically Russian connotation of "generous." There are, to be sure, streets that are fairly narrow in the oldest part of Moscow, notably in the picturesque area directly east of the Kremlin known to this day as the "*Kitai Gorod*"—the "Chinese city," where, from the reign of Ivan the Terrible (1530-1584) on, Tartars and other merchants were allowed to camp and peddle their wares. By and large, however, those who undertook to aggrandize the capital of all the Russias were possessed of an unquestionably *shiroki* spirit—one most spectacularly displayed today by Moscow's energetic mayor, Yuri Luzhkov, with his controversial love of high-rise apartment buildings that are so huge that they are veritable towns constructed in a vertiginously vertical dimension. (Moscow wits have dubbed these architectural experiments in habitational gigantomania "*Ryesinski Empir*"—a new (neo-Napoleonic) Empire style named after its most enthusiastic promoter, Vladimir Ryesin, a famous Soviet bridge-builder who is now deputy mayor in charge of urban development.)

And since we are dealing with matters of urban space, I would like to put in a good word for what, even more than its broad thoroughfares, holds this huge city together and enables it to survive as a megalopolis: an admirable and—rare indeed in this Gogolian land of administrative sloth and Kafkaesque bureaucracy—a surprisingly efficient subway system, used almost every day by more than nine million Muscovites, which puts to shame those of New York, London, and even Paris. Long before coming to Moscow, I had heard of this "absurdly" ornate metro system, in which no two stations are alike, all having been designed to vie with one another in the lavish variety and inventiveness of their frescoed murals, mosaics, and medallions, many with sculpted ornaments and marble-faced columns, not to mention *art déco* lighting fixtures embellishing and illuminating their majestic vaults; what I saw, however, far surpassed my expectations. Many of these stations, designed in the 1930's to imbue the citizens of the Soviet Union with a sense of patriotic pride and veneration for beauty calculated to put them into the proper mood for positive achievements in factory and office work, have remained masterpieces of 20th-century art, and the fact that they were actually commissioned, or at least authorized, by Stalin in no way detracts from their artistic merit.

Indeed, I think it can be said without exaggeration that the Moscow metro system was the Soviet Union's greatest achievement. If it had been as successful in other fields of architectural and engineering endeavor, the history of its poor, downtrodden citizens would have been radically different. This vast, bicontinental country would long since have had an automobile industry worthy of respect, with the kind of modern highways that Hitler gave the Germans and Mussolini, his Italians. Nor would the vitally important railroad, telephone, and postal services have been allowed to degenerate to their present levels of dismal decrepitude. For the most astonishing thing about the Moscow metro system is that, like that of St. Petersburg, it is up-to-date and efficient.

The distances between subway stations tend to be great (two to three times longer than those of New York or Paris, more like those of London), but the time gap between incoming trains—rarely more than three minutes, indicated on a second-by-second clock above the tunnel entrance—makes New York's subway system look like a relic of the 19th century.

When I asked a Moscow businessman, who had kindly invited me to dinner at a sumptuous Uzbekistan restaurant, why a country capable of running such an efficient metro system had not been able to mass-produce an automobile capable of rivaling the German Volkswagen, he explained that the main reason was not a lack of skilled and inventive engineers: It was because the entire Soviet system was geared to military aims and production. The Russians, it should not be forgotten, had managed to design and build what tank experts regarded as the best ar-

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mored troop-carrier in the world. In our world, however, this is no longer what really matters.

This is a valid explanation, so far as it goes. There is no denying that, when the Soviet authorities were willing to invest on a massive scale, they were able to achieve spectacular results—notably in the field of rocket propulsion. When, in April 1961, their astrophysicists put the world's first astronaut, Yuri Gagarin, into space, many Russians naively believed that the long proclaimed Bolshevik dream of the 1930's—*dognat i peregnat Amerikoo* (to catch up with and overtake America)—was at last coming true and that, as Nikita Khrushchev put it in his gruff Ukrainian way, the Russians were now going to "bury" the Americans. The illusion was short-lived, however, because nothing fundamental had been done to modernize planning and production in other industrial fields. The present dramatic fall from general favor of the Lada is the result not simply of its relative absence of sophistication, compared with West European cars, but, above all, of a phenomenon I had already noticed in St. Petersburg: the prestige enjoyed by products that are foreign, and, thus, new, "exciting," and not boringly Soviet. (The influence of that intangible, statistically unmeasurable factor of collective "boredom" in the momentous events that culminated in the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 cannot, I think, be overestimated.) What has so far proved to be an indelible stigma for the luckless Lada, in the eyes of Russians rich enough to be able to buy a new car, is the fatal fact that it has remained the automotive product of a stifling regime that was repudiated by at least three quarters of the inhabitants of the Soviet Union.

Because of the extraordinary width of Moscow's major thoroughfares, a large number of underpasses were built at strategic intersections to keep pedestrians from being run down by reckless drivers. But what surprised and delighted me—this was not something I had read about in the newspapers—is what has happened to these underpasses, particularly where they also serve as metro entranceways. Within the last eight years, virtually all of them have been invaded by a kind of underground shopping culture: tiny booths or "kiosks" (as the Russians call them) that offer every conceivable object for sale—from pipes, cigarette lighters, clocks and watches, camera film, medicines, soap, toothpaste, lipstick, socks, shoes, sweaters, scarves, sexy (and unsexy) underwear, and furry *shapkas* to flower and vegetable seeds, books, CD's, videocassettes, telephone and internet cards, as well as "pregnant" Russian dolls in brightly painted woodwork, which, when opened, reveal a smaller one inside. (These peasant artifacts now include, in an ingenious form of *lèse-majesté*, wooden effigies of President Putin, which, when opened, reveal a smaller, then an even smaller, and finally a diminutive Vladimir.)

Far from being frowned upon, these subterranean shopping galleries in now well-lit underpasses were encouraged by the municipal authorities as a gregarious antidote to the violent muggings and hooligan attacks on pedestrians that were so rampant during the chaotic lawlessness of the early 1990's.

A similar development—a form of "nomadic capitalism"—has sprung up more or less spontaneously aboveground, along many, often tree-lined, sidewalks broad enough to accommodate wooden shacks and booths. Nature, as the saying has it, abhors a vacuum—here caused by a dire absence of shopping space. We should not forget that, in the Soviet Union and in other Sovietized countries geared to (often shoddy and unsaleable) production rather than to popular consumption, the amount of space *per capita* made available for shopping was among the lowest in the entire world. When the artificial constraints were finally lifted in the early 1990's, there was simply not enough space available to meet the impatient demand of enterprising souls wishing to set up shops—on the ground floors, for example, of antiquated plants and factories, administrative buildings, and even research institutes. The resultant vacuum was filled by sidewalk vendors, who now peddle everything from sausages, cheeses, meat, and fish to lemons, oranges, early strawberries, and tomatoes from Spain and grapes, melons, and eggplant from Uzbekistan, which has recently replaced strife-stricken Georgia as a major supplier of fruits and vegetables.

What Russian journalist Alexei Varlamov has called "*dacha* agriculture"—the intensive cultivation by the relatively well-to-do of private plots of land to provide for basic nutrition in vegetables (potatoes, cabbages, carrots, beets, cucumbers, onions, *etc.*) and cherries, strawberries, and other varieties of berries found in the extensive woodlands surrounding Moscow—has ceased to exist as a means of survival. Those fortunate enough to own them drive out to their *dachas* for long weekends or stay there for weeks on end between May and September (summers in northern Russia are short) and do their gardening as a kind of hobby intended to provide culinary additives to what they can now find in shops and small supermarkets. As a clever housewife explained to me with admirable concision: "Previously there were no foodstuffs—whence no shops!"

Whether this constitutes an "economic revolution" is an open question. I think that it does—but not for personal reasons. One day in central Moscow, I was seated in a well-designed buffet alluringly named a Press Club—itself a remarkable example of Muscovite initiative in the field of gastronomy—when an attractive receptionist working for a petroleum company undertook to remind me: "Just think! Fifteen years ago, we were still having to stand in long queues to buy *smetana*!" (the sour cream beloved of northern Russians, who like to spread it on almost anything, above all on and in their *borscht*). Such queues have disappeared.

Today, the most spectacular Russian achievement in the art or craft of supersalesmanship is, with little doubt, the gigantic Gorbushka supermarket, located not far from the Izmailovsky Park, in the southwestern suburbs of Moscow. "Gorbushka" was the popular name given to a Soviet community center for workers, which, in the mid-1980's, youngsters wishing to let off steam began renting for rock-'n'-roll sessions. Repeated attempts by the Soviet authorities to check this insidious invasion of "Western cultural decadence" in the "Club named after Gorbunov" (its full official name, featuring some obscure hero of communistic exemplarity) only resulted in enhancing its prestige. This thriving black market in illegally imported and pirated products became such a public scandal that the area was regularly closed by the authorities on Saturdays and Sundays to thwart weekend buyers and black marketeers. When the Soviet system began to crumble in the mid 1990's, the frustrated black marketeers decided to become respectable salesmen—first by renting space in the nearby headquarters building of the Rubin factory, which had previously been the sole authorized manufacturer of TV sets for the entire Soviet Union. Then, they proceeded to build a brand-new, four-story edifice in the vacant compound behind the Rubin factory. At least

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200-yards long and as many wide, this rejuvenated Gorbushka became a gigantic supermarket exclusively devoted to selling ultramodern electronic hardware and camera equipment, radios, TV's, videocassettes, CD's, and every known (and unknown) brand of computer. I have never seen anything like it, certainly not in congested Paris or London. Indeed, for reasons of urban space alone, I doubt that anything remotely comparable exists elsewhere in Europe. Moscow's Gorbushka has already become an irresistible magnet for shoppers from the Balkans and Eastern, Central, and even Western Europe, who flock here in droves.

This bustling supermarket unquestionably is breathtakingly dynamic. But is this dynamism in itself a sure sign of robust health? One thing becomes patheticalIy apparent to anyone energetic enough to visit every nook and cranny of this fabulous bazaar: Virtually all the items of electronic hardware on display are of foreign manufacture. Like the huge posters advertising Philips or Heineken, which now proudly sit like storks—or like vampires?—atop certain public buildings along the Moskva River, could it be that the gigantic success of the Gorbushka is less a sign of Russia's economic strength than a symbol of its enduring weakness?

Curtis Cate is the author of four biographies, the first of which—devoted to the French aviator-author Antoine de Saint-Exupéry—was recently published in Moscow in an unauthorized translation.

Letter From Sweden

by Alberto Carosa

The Swedes Say "No" to the Euro: The Revolt of Moderates

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Following the Danish rejection of the euro in September 2000 and the Irish rejection of Nice in June 2001, the Swedes have rejected the euro by an overwhelming majority, despite the "yes" side having outspent the opposition by more than five to one.

For the first time in decades (possibly in centuries), the Swedes did not heed the call of their political establishment, which urged them to back the government decision to join the eurozone. "A violent straight to the face of power" was the headline splashed across the front page of the major Swedish daily *Dagens Nyheter* on the day after the September 14 referendum.

These were the final figures: 56.1 percent said "no," and 41.8 percent said "yes," with 2.1 percent of the ballots left blank. Over 80 percent of Sweden's 7.1 million voters turned out. This victory goes well beyond the mere numerical margin, so much so that the term "crushing" could not have been more appropriate. Such analysis would generally apply to all countries where there have been E.U.-related referenda, either on the addition of new members (the last of these referenda was held in Latvia on September 20, 2003) or simply on joining the eurozone. In all these countries, the pro-euro camp enjoyed far greater funding and support. Sweden was no exception: Business, the political parties, the press, trade unions, and celebrities also urged a "yes" vote. A common slogan of the "no" side was that "we have the arguments but not the money."

Why should we endanger our satisfactory economic situation, most Swedes must have wondered, *with a leap in the dark likely to undermine our generous welfare system*? Not coincidentally, a stable economy is common to other countries that remain outside the eurozone, such as Denmark, the United Kingdom, Switzerland, and Norway, and warnings of an economic catastrophe in the event of a "no" vote seemed hard to square with reality.

Unlike the Danish "no" to Maastricht in 1992, however, or the Irish "no" to Nice, the effects on the European Union of the Swedish "no" to the euro are virtually nil, further complicating the chances for Britain and Denmark to join at some stage. The staunchest defenders of the European Union downplayed the outcome. German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder tried to save face by saying that "the door is still open" for Sweden to adopt the euro, probably meaning that another referendum will be held, on the assumption that a euroskeptic vote is never to be taken too seriously and may always be reversed. European Commission President Romano Prodi was less diplomatic: The Swedish "no" vote was, he said, the result of "a fear of novelty, in particular among simple people." Other comments, such as "Sweden will lose influence" and "staying out will cost a political and economic price," exemplified the scare tactics increasingly resorted to by the "yes" front, once they realized they were losing ground. "If anything were to happen that would dramatically change the advantages to Sweden of using the euro," Prime Minister Göran Persson said in a joint statement with rival parties, in a last-minute bid to convince voters, "the government would postpone the entry." Ericsson, the telecommunications giant, hinted that a "no" vote might affect its investment decisions, although it was careful not to be specific. But a rare example of arrogance was shown by Hans-Olov Olsson, president and CEO of Volvo. "It was a mistake to have a referendum in Sweden," he said. "Why do we have the expertise of politicians when we throw away one issue to the public which does not have the knowledge?" A similar statement was made by Danish Europhiles after their defeat in the referendum on the Maastricht Treaty in May 1992, when they blasted their government's decision to publish and distribute copies of the treaty before the vote.

All this, however, was to no avail, as was the ghastly murder of the Swedish foreign minister Anna Lindh, a party colleague and close collaborator of Persson, who was stabbed to death in Stockholm a few days before the vote. A fervent Europhile and rumored successor to Persson, she was the most ardent proponent and active propagandist in favor of the euro, and the media had rather cynically spoken of a possible "Lindh effect" benefiting a "yes" vote.

The most interesting implication of the "no" vote was pointed out by Henrik Dahlsson, the Swedish secretary-general of the European Alliance of EU-critical Movements (TEAM) and one of the main coordinators of the "no" campaign in Sweden. TEAM is an information network linking 47 organizations, including political parties and NGO's from across the political spectrum in 18 European countries. In the United Kingdom, it is primarily the conservatives who are against the euro and critical of centralization of power in Brussels. In Sweden, however, the left and the Greens make up the primary opposition, and those who tipped the balance in favor of the "no" vote were precisely the moderate conservatives who "betrayed" their political leaders.

Many of these center-right voters had voted in favor of E.U. membership in 1994. According to exit polls, more than 25 percent of the liberal and conservative voters chose the "no" ballot. "This

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is an important factor when explaining the result," said professor Rutger Lindahl, who teaches political science at Gothenburg University. "The secure Yes-votes from the last referendum said no this time. The voters have not followed their party's view on the euro." A poll published ten days before the referendum also showed that a quarter of the "yes" voters in the 1994 referendum planned to say "no" to the euro. "The no-side won the economic case against the euro. But in the 1994 referendum the voters believed in the yes-side's economic arguments for joining the EU," Professor Lindahl continued. "It has been done with the help of such well-established economists as Nils Lundgren," a former chief economist of one of Sweden's largest banks, Nordea. Lindahl mentions other examples of leading economists on the "no" side, including Lars Wohlin and Bengt Dennis, former heads of the Swedish Central Bank.

The revolt against the euro goes against the historical tradition of the country. By and large, the Swedes have always been unified behind the state and their leaders. They embraced Christianity at the turn of the 11th century in the wake of the conversion of their kings and aristocracy, and, in much the same way, they followed their ruling class when it switched to Lutheranism. While the Swedes were slow to accept the new faith in lieu of their heathen beliefs, they became all the more zealous once they had done so. Similarly, Sweden became a strong bulwark of Protestantism. In more recent times, the Swedes transferred their allegiance to secular leaders, embodied in the Social Democratic Party, which has governed for 60 out of the last 70 years. To the extent that the "no" vote defeated "Anna Lindh's Europe" (as some commentators put it), it was also a defeat for the Swedish model of the welfare state, which was becoming the model for Europe. Among the more recent features of this Swedish model is the approval of a bill enabling homosexual couples to adopt foreign children, a proposal that no other parliament in the world has passed. This model is poles apart from another Swedish model of society, upheld by Saint Bridget of Sweden according to her renowned biographer Johannes Jörgensen: The kingdom of Sweden ought to be like a pure and clear summer sky, a kingdom of peace and justice, where "good champions," "chivalry," and "brave heroes" can be found. It remains to be seen which of the two Swedens should be credited with the landmark victory against the euro.

Alberto Carosa is the editor of Famiglia Domani Flash, *a pro-family newsletter published in Rome.*

Letter From Texas

by Denne Sweeney

The Unvanquished Family

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This is the story of a real Texas family. Locations and names have been changed to protect the family's anonymity.

Notes from a casual conversation between office coworkers:

He: "What are you gonna do this weekend?"

She: "Host a family reunion."

He: "How many will be there."

She: "466."

He (surprised at size and exactness of number): "How many are in the family?"

She: "469. One is in the hospital; two are on a world cruise. All the rest will be there."

Corporate relocations caused me to lose track of my friend shortly thereafter. Fifteen years later, I ran into her again.

"How's the family?" I asked.

"Stronger than ever," she replied.

There was obviously too much going on here to ignore. An extended family that was not dysfunctional or dissolving? I called my friend again and asked for an interview. It took several months to arrange. Many of the older family members were dead set against revealing anything about the family. I finally convinced them, however, that their story needed to be told and that other families, struggling with a world that seems intent on destroying them, might benefit from it. Finally the permission came, and I headed out for the tiny town east of Houston that is home base for the Dawson family.

The flat Texas plains roll out east of the towers of Houston into grass and scrub-tree country. Thirty miles out, the land is in transition from cattle country to bedroom community. The great oilfields are still 50 miles to the east; this is land hard-won by the labor of cotton farmers and ranchers. The town that the Dawsons call home is struggling to stay alive. The brick streets were once piled high with cotton bales, and the constant flow of wagons kept residents awake at night. Those days are long gone. The 80-year-old theater (owned by the third generation of movie operators), which opened during the silent-film era and still has the same seats, shows first-run films on its sole screen, and the new sandwich shop does a brisk business. But the sprawling suburban communities, which provide homes for the hundreds of Houston commuters trying to flee the noise and the congestion of Texas' largest city, provide the major source of tax revenue. The downtown buildings may be crumbling, but the high school is brand new, and the football games are well attended.

Lily Dawson was waiting for me when I arrived at the small restaurant. She had hardly aged at all in the years since we shared an office. She was a lot thinner and confessed that losing weight was something she had to do in order to keep her energy level up. I quickly understood why she needed all that energy: Although she no longer has a corporate job in Houston, she maintains a full schedule as president of Dawson Family, Inc., administrator of the County Development Board, and head of the Council of County Governments. She also sings in the county choir, is president of a local service group, and spends many hours on church activities. The two county jobs and the volunteer work would be enough for most people, but it is her job as Dawson president that consumes the majority of her time. Dawson Family, Inc., is not just a family—it is a virtual empire.

Lily started the interview herself. She was proud of the family's latest initiatives—acquiring large tracts of land. The family tries to plan far into the future—50 or 100 years—and, as the population explodes in Texas, the family wants to ensure that it has plenty of land for any anticipated endeavors and for capital appreciation. The land-acquisition program is only part of the family's vast holdings. They own homes, buildings, summer camps, and businesses. Donations to the family treasury and frequent bequests over the decades have given the family a sizable treasury.

"Everybody in the family works," said Lily, "but nobody has to, financially. There is enough money in the treasury to support everyone in the family for the rest of their lives. But that's not the way we function—we're a working family."

The bedrock values the family espous-

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es would endear them to the hearts of all conservatives—work hard, play hard, concentrate on basics, take care of the kids and old folks. It seems to work; although the family reserves the right to expel any nonconforming member from the family, Lily says they have never had to reject one of their own. "We can be pretty persuasive, and the older family members especially know how to show the younger members the error of their ways." Only one member has tried to reject the family. "A few years ago, one 'wild child' wanted out of the family. She demanded her portion of the money and threatened to sue us. So we bought her out. Four years later, the money was gone, and she missed the family support system, so her daddy had to buy her back into the family." The stability provided by this family structure has an extra benefit: Children are careful in choosing their mates, since the spouses automatically become members of the family. In the 100-plus years of family records, there has been only one divorce.

The support system the family provides would be the envy of many small countries. The family's children all receive scholarships that provide full college tuition and expenses. Each scholarship recipient is expected to maintain passing grades and, upon graduation, to repay the scholarship, although there is no time limit or interest on the loan. In addition, the graduate is expected to provide services at cost to the family for the rest of his life in his chosen profession. A similar arrangement applies to skilled trades. At the age of 12 or 13, children are expected to announce their career interests. An apprenticeship program is arranged with family members, based on the child's interest. If the child's talents are not supported by a family enterprise, a third-party arrangement is worked out whereby the child is apprenticed to a family-friendly business, with the family paying the child's salary. "Education," says Lily, "is the family's number-one priority."

With this elaborate barter system, the family has built up an impressive bank of people skills. If a member needs medical attention, a family doctor will provide it—at cost. If a pet is sick, a family veterinarian provides care. If a house is needed, family electricians, plumbers, carpenters, architects, flooring installers, and loan officers descend on the building site to build the needed home for the cost of materials.

The family's number-two priority is taking care of older members. "Nobody in the family ever goes into a nursing home. If the older member has [his] own home, then someone hired by the family takes care of [him] in that home. Usually, these caregivers are family members themselves, but not always. If the member doesn't have a home, then we find some place with the family for [him] to be taken care of," says Lily.

Providing all this largesse requires a solid organizational structure. Lily is the president of the main branch of the family. The family has seven branches, roughly equivalent to corporate branch offices and designed to support the family in their particular regions. Although the family is Texas-based, the branches are spread from Maine to California. The branch presidents, plus Lily, form the board of directors. Generally speaking, the presidency of the main line and each branch is passed to the oldest child—male or female—of the past president. Lily and the branch presidents take their mentoring responsibilities seriously. Lily has been training her eldest son for some years to take over for her eventually. As part of the family's extensive training program, Lily recently completed an instructional tape about the duties of the various key positions for each of the seven branches. The structure does not begin and end with the key officers of the corporation, however. Every member has a job in the family, in addition to the support services he provides.

There are two family meetings per year, which Lily calls "strategic family planning sessions." Most of the major decisions and key planning sessions are held at these democratic meetings. "One of our major concerns right now is the declining family birthrate," said Lily. "We are down to 423 members. We don't know what to do about it, but we're working on the problem." Another tough decision involves determining who gets bonuses. Cash rewards to family members who are needy or who have provided exceptional services to the family are distributed annually. "I hate making that decision the most," says Lily, "because we can't give everybody a bonus."

The semiannual meetings are not all business. "This family has fun together," says Lily. The fun does not start or end with the meetings. Family members maintain a very busy year-round schedule of sporting events, cultural excursions, trips to water parks, and other social activities. They are major supporters of local school activities. This last fact surprised me a bit—I would have expected a family of such conservative inclination to have its own schools. "Although homeschooling is heavily used in the family, most youngsters go to public school," says Lily. "We are well aware of the shortcomings of public schools these days. That's why the children's education is heavily supplemented with testing, additional material, and instruction in the home. The family is very patriotic and is proud of its Southern roots. We have lots of Confederate ancestors, and we're proud of them. We don't much tolerate political correctness. We provide tutors and mentors where needed to make sure the kids really learn what is important."

I was also a bit surprised to learn that family members are not all of the same religion. "We're a very religious family, but we don't insist that everyone belong to the same church. But no matter what church they belong to, they are expected to be active in it and support it."

As befits a corporate enterprise, the family is concerned about security. No more than two of the branch presidents are allowed to travel together at any one time. The most elaborate security system is the home base itself. Nominally Lily's home and ranch, the family built a complete underground shelter into the home. Given a few days advance warning in the event of some natural or man-made disaster, the entire family could be housed in this shelter. Their passion for anonymity, given their resources, is understandable. Even the college tuition provided to each child is paid through a legal foundation, which is untraceable to the family. This same foundation dispenses most of the funds that are spent outside of the family and provides low-cost loans to family members to start or expand businesses. "There is no waste in this family," says Lily. "We only support solid, basic businesses and enterprises. We try to make sure that every enterprise can also provide some core service to the family. We don't finance jet-ski manufacturers."

The family leaves little to chance. It tries to influence everything that could have an impact on the family. This accounts for Lily's two jobs in county government and the host of other government jobs held by family members, including many members in state legislatures. "We do everything strictly legally and aboveboard, but that may not be enough to keep a family out of trouble these days. We try to make sure we have advance warning of any proposed legisla-

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tion that could impact us, especially anything that could affect legal trusts, real estate, or foundations."

As Lily told me about her family's background in her paradoxical rapid-fire Texas drawl, I could not help but feel that this was a family that had come across a magic formula—one that many families would love to emulate but few will have the ability to do so. They have successfully stemmed the tide that threatens most families, and they have done it with good humor, hard work, and a resolute determination that *their family will persevere, by God!*

I had one last question: How did the family start? "I don't know," said Lily. "The original family line was Scottish, but, as far back as I can trace, it has always been a Texas family."

There seems to be one final benefit to being a member of this family: longevity. As we reached the end of our allotted interview time, Lily began to rush me. She had eaten and paid her bill before I had arrived, so she headed for the door of the restaurant at a fast pace. This vigorous, personable lady of indeterminate age—she admits to being at least 12 years past full retirement age—was late for her next meeting. "And I have to stop and pick up Daddy's chicken feed on the way."

Denne Sweeney writes from Ellis County, Texas. He is currently Lt. Commander-in-Chief of the Sons of Confederate Veterans.

Letter From Chile

by Mary Kohler

The Road to Ensenada

◆

At a quarter of nine in the morning, we climbed into our four-wheel-drive pickup where the new road ends at Llanada Grande. Until this year, a flight to its unpaved airstrip or a two-day ride by horse from the automobile road was the only way to get there—and that was after a couple of hours bumping along on that winding road full of potholes.

The narrow gravel road follows the old horse road as far as the Manso River, low now after a month with only one serious rain. Nevertheless, there is a monster bridge, suggesting some idea of what happens in the spring and, sometimes, in other seasons as well.

We used to run a resort a little downstream on the Rio Puelo from the Manso, and, as we drove along just above the farm that supplied fresh produce and fruit to the resort, we could see the two-room farm cabin, christened the "Love Shack," in which we stayed while we were building. A little farther on, we came to the ferry landing, below the big rock where I often sat to look at the twists and turns of the river upstream. Our first employee, Oscar, who drove a boat for us, lives on a farm below the lake, and we planned to visit him for the first time in some years.

Only 15 years ago, when we first came to the valley, we brought an outboard engine and a modern boat, supplanting the *chalupa*, a primitive wooden boat with a one-lung, 16-horse engine and a very small propeller attached to the end of a very long shaft, which was incapable of going up the smallest rapids. This meant getting out at Las Hualas (the place of the Great Grebe), walking for a couple of hours, and then, at the big lake Tagua Tagua, taking another *chalupa* for the slow five-mile ride up the lake.

The mountains come down to the lake so sharply that walking around is impossible. People (and sometimes sheep) rode in *chalupas*; horses and cows, in *chatas*—large, heavy flat-bottomed, high-sided barges pulled by a wimpy *chalupa*.

When we arrived at the ferry landing, there was no ferry there. We had been told that the first ferry came up-lake, leaving at nine in the morning, and then left for the down-lake run at 10:30. Since we had passed four vehicles (two pickups, a bright yellow van-bus, and a car) that had gotten off the ferry, we realized that it must have left immediately upon reloading. When would it return? The last ferry was supposed to be at four in the afternoon.

We hadn't brought lunch, figuring on being in Ensenada in time. After a short wait, however, a car and then a big truck came, so we got into line. Other vehicles came, including the yellow van, and lined up with us. When the ferry arrived, about 11:45, it could only handle some of the waiting clients—the truck, our crew-cab pickup, two cars, and, hanging over onto the loading ramp, the yellow van. The lake was rough, as is normal when the sea breeze comes up about 11:00 in the morning, shooting spray over the cars and the considerable number of foot passengers.

The lodge, no longer ours, is still there. The surroundings look much the same, although, in the 15 years since we first came, most of the forest on the mountains across the lake has been burned by wildfires, often set by farmers clearing land. Sadly, civilization has perhaps worsened, rather than improved, fire control.

Since then, the economy west of the lake has changed from our Middle West-at-the-turn-of-the-last-century to today. Approaching us is a large tour bus, advertising an excursion to Tagua Tagua, following the "road" we used to have to walk. The farms all have electricity, TV antennas, cars and driveways. The farmers have cell phones. All the boats have outboards, some with jets. And, in a way, we are responsible for starting the change.

As we drove the road into the village of Puelo, which also has a grass airstrip, we were detained by the yellow van unloading a passenger and his baggage. It was Oscar! With the same wonderful smile, he is one of the success stories among the many failures of modernization. With his van, he has become the proprietor of the chief bus service from Puelo to Llanada Grande.

So, after many hugs and a little conversation in our limited Spanish and his still-more-limited English, we drove on. We crossed the huge new bridge over the Rio Puelo, which made all this possible, and, after two hours on the bumpy road, we arrived at Ensenada to a fine lunch of Meat for Poor People (*Lomo a la Pobre*—steak with two fried eggs on top and lots of *papas fritas*).

We still live here in the U.S. winter . . . farther upriver, still beyond the end of the road, with our motor boat—which can now take us to the Porton, an hour's walk from Llanada Grande—as our only transportation. We can still look at the mountains all around us, some showing scars from bad fires. We can still swim in the clear water of our lagoon, catch trout in the Rio Puelo, walk in our small piece of virgin forest, and crank up the cookstove in the mornings—until the helicopter comes to take us out of our paradise.

Mary Kohler is vice chairman of the board of directors of The Rockford Institute.

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by Srdja Trifkovic

Pakistan's Nuclear Proliferation

In a speech at the National Defense University in Washington, D.C., on February 11, President Bush warned against the spread of nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons and suggested measures to dismantle a growing black market in nuclear fuel and technology. He called the possibility of a sudden attack by weapons of mass destruction "the greatest threat before humanity today" and predicted that America and the rest of the world would have to face it for decades to come.

Mr. Bush said that the rules governing nuclear proliferation should be strengthened, including introducing a ban on the shipment of nuclear technology to countries that currently lack processing equipment. The 1970 Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons has allowed nonnuclear states to develop atomic power plants with the understanding that they would not be used as fronts for weapons-making, but Mr. Bush says that recently disclosed nuclear-weapons programs in Iran and North Korea prove that the treaty is no longer effective. He called for new rules that would require nations to declare their nuclear facilities and capabilities and to open themselves to international inspections. Nonsignatories would be prohibited from importing equipment for nuclear programs.

The President's warnings reflect a real problem, even if his underlying political objective is to move the context of the ongoing debate about weapons of mass destruction from the embarrassing failure to find them in Iraq to what he called "a massive threat . . . that isn't countered by Cold War strategies." He also appeared keen to shift the focus from the shortcomings of the intelligence community in Iraq to the role of U.S. intelligence agencies in detecting the illicit proliferation network of Abdul Qadeer Khan, the architect of Pakistan's nuclear program.

A week before Mr. Bush's speech, Dr. Khan stunned the world when he admitted on television to leaking nuclear-weapons secrets to—among others—North Korea, Libya, and Iran. Widely considered a national hero in Pakistan for his role in developing the country's nuclear arsenal, Khan made his "confession" on February 4, after a meeting with President Pervez Musharraf. He assured his countrymen that, in all his foreign endeavors, he had acted "without authorization" from General Musharraf's government, promised not to do so again, and asked for forgiveness. The meeting between Musharraf and Khan, and the latter's subsequent TV appearance, were carefully choreographed by the government. Musharraf looked stern in his military fatigues and spoke through pursed lips, while Khan appeared to be bending toward him in supplication.

The proceedings were reminiscent of Moscow, 1936, except that Khan's life and liberty were not in any danger. His *de facto* invincibility became obvious when the government immediately decided to grant him "clemency," while repeating Khan's assertion that his actions were "unauthorized." A spokesman for Pakistan's Foreign Ministry declared that the affair was over and asserted that the admission itself proved Pakistan to be a "responsible nuclear weapons state."

Such assurances were at odds with Musharraf's point-blank refusal to hand over any documents to any international agency or to allow members of the U.N. Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) into Pakistan to investigate the affair. The Pakistani president sounded a defiant note when he declared that his is a sovereign country, and, therefore, "no document will be given, no independent investigation will take place." Vowing never to roll back Pakistan's nuclear assets, Musharraf also lashed out at fellow Muslim nations Iran and Libya for caving in to international inspectors and turning over documents on their nuclear programs. In a subsequent interview, he even blamed Washington for not warning him of Khan's activities in a more timely manner.

The initial reaction from Washington was extraordinarily mild. "President Musharraf has assured us that Pakistan was not involved in any kind of proliferation," said White House spokesman Scott McClellan:

> The investigation by the government of Pakistan demonstrates their commitments to addressing the issue of proliferation, and this proliferation is no longer. The actions of Pakistan have broken up this network and that's important.

In the same spirit, State Department spokesman Richard Boucher stated that the Bush administration welcomed Pakistan's announcement and praised Musharraf's alleged cooperativeness:

> It marks the sign of how seriously the government takes the commitments that President Musharraf has made to make sure that his nation is not a source of prohibited technologies for other countries. Pakistan, in this process, has been working very closely with the IAEA and with other governments, as they investigate and as they look at the information that is coming out of, especially, the IAEA on what's been going on. So we welcome President Musharraf's actions, as do other members of the international community.

McClellan's and Boucher's statements continue the United States' long-standing appeasement of Pakistan's nuclear transgressions. In 1972, following its third war with India, the government in Islamabad secretly decided to develop nuclear weapons. Its program was ostensibly peaceful, but, in 1974, Western suppliers embargoed all further exports of technology. Following the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, however, the Reagan administration lifted all sanctions and provided generous military and financial aid. By 1983, the CIA strongly suspected that China had supplied Pakistan with a bomb design, but the White House looked the other way. That same year, a Dutch court

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convicted Khan *in absentia* on a charge of stealing confidential material—allegedly used to jump-start Pakistan's nuclear program in 1976—from the British-German-Dutch nuclear conglomerate URENCO and sentenced him to four years in prison. Soon thereafter, Pakistan was able to complete a 40-megawatt heavy-water reactor that provided a source of plutonium-bearing spent fuel. The process reached its logical conclusion on May 28, 1998, when Pakistan detonated a string of nuclear devices and became the first Islamic country to join the nuclear club.

Two months after September 11, the BBC's *Newsnight* and the *Guardian* reported that the Bush administration had thwarted an investigation of Khan and his associates. Former CIA operatives told the BBC that they could not investigate the development of "Islamic bombs" by Pakistan because the funding appeared to originate in Saudi Arabia. Greg Palast and David Pallister, the authors of the report, concluded that the Bush administration "spike" of the investigation followed from the dual policy of not alienating Saudi Arabia and of courting the support of the authorities in Islamabad for the military action in Afghanistan.

In the same spirit, two years ago, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld declared that the United States was not concerned about the potential for misuse of Pakistan's nuclear weapons and declared that he did not "personally believe that there is a risk." In another context, such assurances could be understood as a necessary political expedient *vis-à-vis* a major Muslim power whose support is needed in the "War on Terror." Such a policy, however, is no longer tenable. An administration that went to war in Iraq in order to take away her alleged WMD's cannot afford to be perceived as complicit in Pakistan's efforts to escape international censure and scrutiny. As former U.S. chief weapons inspector David Kay put it, "I can think of no one who deserves less to be pardoned." He called the disclosures "a wake-up call."

This issue provides a test of Mr. Bush's declared resolve to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons. He should not allow Musharraf to deny international scrutiny of his country's nuclear program. In exchange for not publicly embarrassing the general, President Bush should insist that Pakistan submit her nuclear program to international inspection and allow some degree of scrutiny by the United States over her existing nuclear arsenal. In private, Bush should not even pretend to believe the assertion that one man could have maintained an illicit nuclear-proliferation network with some of the most dangerous regimes in the world without the Musharraf government's knowledge, participation, and active encouragement.

At the time of this writing, the magnitude of the problem remains unknown. It is yet to be established whether Khan's direct or indirect contacts have included Islamic terrorist cells or groups or people connected with them, nor what technological blueprints, materials, or hardware may have exchanged hands. Khan is known to have supplied Libya with the high-speed centrifuges needed to make uranium bomb fuel and even designs for the bomb itself. Who else has benefited from his services? Such concern is justified in light of Khan's open support for Muslim solidarity. He was eager to defy the West and to pierce the "clouds of the so-called secrecy," as he once put it. A senior Pakistani politician told the *New York Times* that Khan felt that giving nuclear technology to a Muslim country was not a crime. Islamic activists in Pakistan have threatened to mount street protests if Khan goes on trial.

The sentiment is shared by many members of Pakistan's ruling elite, which is not surprising, considering that Pakistan is the first modern state to be established on openly Islamic principles. Even her name, "Land of the Pure," implies that only the "pure" ones—Muslims—are true citizens. Pakistan still suffers from many defects derived from her origins. She is divided by caste, with the highest status reserved for the alleged descendants of Arab conquerors, called *ashraf*. This social structure predicated on the supposed superiority of Islamic imperialism suggests that Islam is the cause, or at least an aggravating feature, in an array of problems that includes underdevelopment, illiteracy, oppression, poverty, disease, and rigidity of thought. As long as the country's Islamic character is explicitly upheld by Musharraf and his successors, Pakistan cannot evolve into a democracy, an efficient economy, or a civilized polity without undermining the religious rationale for her very existence. Unlike neighboring India, Pakistan has never been a functional democracy. To this day, she discriminates against Christians and other religious minorities, and she covertly aids terrorists in Jammu and Kashmir.

Mr. Bush's stated objective of seeing Pakistan develop into a "moderate" Islamic state cannot be advanced if Washington continues to turn a blind eye to the transgressions of the regime in Islamabad. Soft-pedaling Pakistan's role as a nuclear proliferator would be particularly counterproductive. It could only encourage Musharraf's unrepentant cockiness and postpone the long-overdue reform of his army, which remains under the command of officers whose loyalties are often inimical to Western interests and who have allowed countless Taliban and Al Qaeda fighters to slip across the border from Afghanistan to stay out of the U.S. military's reach. Musharraf's government has released many Islamic militants detained after September 11, and it has backtracked on its promise to control the Islamic schools that are breeding new terrorists.

A degree of cooperation with Pakistan in Mr. Bush's War on Terror is perhaps inevitable, just as various Cold War alliances with nasty Third World regimes were sometimes necessary, but the relationship should not go beyond the pragmatic. It will be unfortunate if the facts surrounding Pakistan's passing of nuclear secrets to some of the least-pleasant regimes on earth continue to be clouded by American denials and the feigned optimism that have, for decades, characterized Washington's relations with its supposed allies in the Muslim world. ◦c

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RACE

The Illinois Negro Code

by Steve Berg

Most people believe the history of race relations in the United States is neatly divided by geography. Those states north of the Mason-Dixon Line were paragons of equality and liberty, where race was not an issue and diversity flourished in all its glory. In the benighted states to their south, however, the entire social structure was based on slavery and racist oppression. Consequently, the War Between the States was fought purely over the issue of slavery, and, as is usual in trial by combat, the arms of the virtuous side were strengthened by the Hand of the Almighty, which led to their victory over those rebellious slaveholding cretins. For some unknown reason, the books written by court historians do not start with the words "once upon a time."

In reality, things were much different, as the history of Illinois demonstrates.

Article VIII, Section 12, of the first Illinois state constitution (1818) states that "every person in the state has a right to justice, and to a remedy to wrongs committed against his person, property, or reputation." However, limits were soon placed on this enumerated right. In fact, Article V of this same constitution prohibited "negroes, mulattoes, and Indians" from serving in the state militia. This meant that these people were not allowed to keep or bear arms. In "An Act Concerning Practice," which was put in force on February 2, 1827, the first of the legal restrictions on citizenship rights for blacks was established. Section 3 states: "A negro, mulatto, or Indian shall not be a witness in any court, or in any case, against a white person. A person having one fourth part negro blood shall be adjudged a mulatto." This section effectively prevents any of the aforementioned from having recourse in a court of law against the depredations of any white person. (This is reminiscent of the status of *Dhimmis* under Islamic law.) The second clause of this section did state, however, that negroes and mulattoes are persons.

The constitution of 1818 has a curious attitude toward slavery. Since slavery was not allowed in the Northwest Territories, Illinois should never have had any slaves within its borders. Article VI generally forbids slavery, except as punishment for crimes. Yet Section 2 specifically allows slaves from other states to work in the Shawneetown salt works, though only for a term of one year, after which they were to be freed.

Strife over slavery surfaced early in Illinois. In fact, there was a movement for another constitutional convention as early as 1822, with the idea of making Illinois a slave state. After some chicanery, the General Assembly passed a resolution calling for a convention. A spirited campaign ensued, and the proposal failed at the polls in 1824. Still, harsh laws concerning blacks continued to be put on the books.

In another law, passed on February 7, 1827, and put into effect on June 1, 1827, blacks and women were denied the right to sit on juries. The English common-law tradition holds that it is important that a person be judged by a jury of his peers if justice is to be served. Under Illinois law, during this time period, a woman could testify in court in most cases, yet she was denied the right to have other women serve on her jury. For blacks, the situation was worse. They could not testify even in their own defense if a white person was involved, and their jury would consist of white men.

By the early 1830's, Illinois law books already had a section entitled the "Negro Code." On March 30, 1819, the General Assembly passed "*AN ACT respecting Free Negroes, Mulattoes, Servants, and Slaves*"—a comprehensive law that governed the conditions under which free blacks, as well as slaves and servants, could come into the state. Illinois was a very poor state in those days, and the government did not want anyone coming into the state who might be a burden on the state's rudimentary welfare system. Section 3 specifically forbids the bringing of slaves into the state for the purpose of freeing them and having them become public charges. People bringing slaves into the state were required to post a $1,000 bond for each to ensure that they were not to be freed and placed on the public dole.

Under this law, no black or mulatto was allowed to reside in Illinois unless he could produce a court certificate from some jurisdiction in the United States attesting to his free status. This certificate was to be recorded in the county of his residence. Should the free black man have a family, his certificate needed to be endorsed after the birth of each new child by a court clerk. While the burden of keeping these records seems extreme today, it may actually have provided some protection against individuals being seized as fugitive slaves and hauled off to another state. How much protection this certificate would provide is unclear, however, since Section 4 says: "*Provided, nevertheless*, That nothing in this act contained, shall be construed to bar the lawful claim of any person or persons to any such negro or mulatto." In other words, there would be little legal recourse for any free black if someone claimed him as a slave and produced some bogus documentation.

Any free black was required to show a certificate of freedom in order to gain employment in Illinois. Those employers who disregarded this requirement were to be fined $1.50 per person, per day.

In fairness to the state of Illinois, this law also prescribed fair treatment of servants. When their terms of indenture were up, they were to be provided with clothes and other necessities. A servant would have to consent before his contract could be transferred to another master. There were provisions for what to do when servants misbehaved and also for masters who failed in their duties. Servants who acquired property during their terms of indenture were allowed to keep it.

On the other hand, there were harsh penalties if slaves or servants were found more than ten miles away from their master's residence without a pass. Such an infraction could be punished with up to 35 lashes. Servants could be lashed for infractions for which free people were merely fined. The going rate was 20 lashes for each eight dollars of fine. Nobody was supposed to get more than 40 lashes at any one time. And, in Section 23,

> *be it further enacted*, That riots, routs, unlawful assemblies, tres-

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> passes, and seditious speeches, by any slave or slaves, servant or servants, shall be punished with stripes, at the discretion of a justice of the peace, not exceeding thirty-nine . . .

This statute authorized any person to apprehend such lawbreakers and to haul them off to the justice of the peace. It was even illegal for three or more slaves or servants to assemble for the purpose of dancing or revelry, whether at night or in the daytime, even on private property. If a master was found to have allowed this law to be violated, he could be fined. And there were incentives for others to turn him in.

The fact that the law makes such references to slavery indicates that, contrary to the constitution of 1818, the "peculiar institution" was alive and well in Illinois. Slaves and servants were obviously not considered full citizens. Even free blacks had severe restrictions on their rights.

In 1829, the "*ACT respecting free Negroes and Mulattoes, Servants, and Slaves*" was revised. No longer was it sufficient for a free black to provide local authorities a certificate attesting his freedom. Now, he had to post a $1,000 bond as well. The bonding requirement was not imposed on any blacks already resident in Illinois. This bond was forfeited if the individual ever failed to "demean himself, or herself, in strict conformity with the laws of this state" or became a charge to any Illinois county. Any black without a certificate would now be considered a runaway slave. His status would be posted and published, and the sheriff was to take him into custody. While waiting for a master to show up, the sheriff was authorized "to hire them out for the best price he can get." If no master showed up in a year, the sheriff was to execute a certificate effectively declaring the person to be free. There were provisions for what fees had to be paid to the sheriff should the lawful owner show up. It became a crime for any escaped slave to come to Illinois for the purpose of saving up enough money to buy his freedom. No negro, mulatto, or Indian was allowed to purchase a servant unless that person was the same "complexion" as the master. Finally, it was declared illegal for any negro or mulatto to marry any white person. Section 3 also declares any such marriages null and void, and anyone seeking to be married in violation of this law was to be given 39 lashes and imprisoned for up to one year. Any official who presided at the marriage of different races faced a fine of not less than $200 and would be ineligible for any future office in the state.

By 1845, it was illegal for people of differing races to cohabit. Those who did so were believed to be living in an "open state of adultery and fornication." Anyone convicted of violating this law was subject to a fine of up to $500 and imprisonment for not more than a year. If this was not a sufficient deterrent, "for the second offense the punishment shall be double, for the third treble, and in the same ratio for each succeeding offense."

By the 1840's, the 1818 constitution was becoming an albatross around the neck of the state. Whig internal improvements had put the state government into a severe fiscal crisis. Some social problems were also coming to the fore. The northern part of the state was being heavily settled by immigrants from Northern states. The southern half of Illinois, however, was populated mostly by people from the South. A constitutional convention was called in 1847 to address the changing situation of the state. Mr. Bond, the delegate from Clinton County, and the son of the first governor of the state, offered a resolution on June 24, 1847, that would order the General Assembly to ban the immigration of free blacks into the state. He also wanted to ensure that people could not bring slaves into Illinois only to set them free. While claiming that he did not want to offend any of the other delegates and that nobody cared more about doing justice to "that class of unfortunate individuals, called free negroes" than he did, he was concerned about the property rights of slaveholders. In his part of Illinois, small communities of free blacks were springing up, and these were aiding and abetting the escape of slaves from other states.

This convention clearly showed the cleavage between the northern and southern halves of the state. Generally, the representatives from the northern counties wanted more political rights for blacks than did those of the South. Still, most of the former took care to state that they were not abolitionists. From the records of the debates of the convention, it is obvious that even those who supported blacks having some civil and political rights did not care for them very much. Concerns were aired regarding possible insurrection of blacks, interracial marriage, blacks wooing white daughters, crime, and the like. It was flatly stated by a number of delegates that blacks were not citizens regardless of what such states as Vermont and Massachusetts might think. The delegates did not think that the races could ever live together in a state of equality. Some voices pointed out that the principles of Christian charity required treating blacks fairly, but these same voices also said that they were not in favor of the Underground Railroad and that the best option for free blacks was foreign colonization. (Colonization was also the preference of both Henry Clay and Abraham Lincoln.) Even the more moderate delegates agreed that there was no question of political equality between blacks and whites, since the people were adamantly against it. Probably the best summary of the political realities of race was given by a Mr. Kinney, the delegate from St. Clair County. He cited what happened when the executors of the estate of statesman John Randolph of Roanoke sought to settle his former slaves in the strongly abolitionist state of Ohio: The locals rose up and drove them off. (In his biography of John Randolph, Russell Kirk corroborates Mr. Kinney on this point.) Mr. Kinney supported the actions of the Ohio abolitionists:

> They did not want them, they knew what sort of a population they were, and how worthless and degraded they become, and how troublesome they always were. If we would allow the negroes any kind of equality we must admit them to the social hearth. It was then that equality commenced. We must live with them and permit them to mingle with us in all our social affairs, and, also, if they desired it, must not object to proposals to marry our daughters.

Finally, a compromise was worked out, under which an article in the new constitution would order the General Assembly, at the earliest possible time, to pass a law forbidding the immigration of free blacks into the state and preventing slave owners from bringing their blacks into Illinois for the purpose of freeing them and dumping them. This provision became Article XIV. To allow for the differing views on blacks in the opposite ends of the state, this article was placed as a separate question on the ballot. The voting followed sectional lines, with only a few southern delegates voting against it. After the convention adjourned for the last

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time, the questions were put to the voters. On March 6, 1848, 60,585 voted in favor of the new constitution, while only 15,903 opposed it. Article XIV passed by a vote of 50,261 to 21,297. That vote also followed sectional lines, being more popular in the southern portion of the state than in the north, but the general opinion seems to have been that blacks were not wanted.

Until after the War Between the States, blacks in Illinois could not vote and did not pay the poll tax; could not marry whites; could not keep or bear arms, serve on juries, or testify in court in a case involving a white. Eventually, they were forbidden even to settle in the state. This denial of rights is an aspect of the history of citizenship in Illinois that has been given short shrift for many years. It is difficult even to find copies of the 1818 and 1848 state constitutions in most libraries. The earliest version of the state constitution that is easily found is that of 1870. Access to the older editions of the Revised Statutes is limited largely by the age and fragility of the remaining copies. Consequently, many people have never heard of the Jim Crow laws that existed in Illinois and many other northern states until their repeal after 1865.

This is unfortunate, because it means that few people have an accurate picture of antebellum racial politics in the North, much less the South. Court historians have been able to keep the truth swept under the rug for nearly a century, but it is finally seeing the light of day.

Steve Berg writes from Galva, Illinois.

INDUSTRY

Blood and Iron Pyrite

by Eric J. Obermeyer

During the late 19th century, when the star of American industrial power was on the rise, protectionist Pennsylvania Congressman William Kelley declared, "A people who cannot supply their own demand for iron and steel, but purchase it from foreigners beyond seas, are not independent . . . they are politically dependent." The 21st century has opened with dozens of bankruptcies in the American steel industry, stretching back to a flood of imported steel that began in 1998.

In response to the steel crisis, *Industry Week* polled various experts for an article that appeared in August 2001, asking, "Does the US need to maintain a viable domestic steel industry to ensure the country's national security?" Several of the intellectuals answered the question in the negative, including former Secretary of Labor Robert Reich and former CIA official Edward Turzanski of LaSalle University. Their reasoning relied heavily on the notion that advanced materials, high technology, and overwhelming military power have significantly reduced the importance of steel to national security. Martin Anderson told *Industry Week*,

> If we truly got into a war in which all our steel was cut off—try to imagine that very difficult scenario—we could simply recycle enough scrap to make whatever we needed, until we got our bombers and missiles off the ground.

Anderson, an influential Babson College senior lecturer and a member of the board of directors of Gleason Corporation, also predicted, "More likely we would take over the foreign source with nuclear weapons."

When an expert can be found to dismiss the importance of maintaining domestic sources of strategic assets on the grounds that they can always be recovered with nuclear blackmail, the world has indeed changed from the days of "Pig Iron" Kelley. Equally pernicious, however, is the underlying notion that, if necessary, lost industries could simply be resurrected and put back into operation in some form, whether for war or in other circumstances where foreign supplies of materials and goods might not be readily available. On that day, when the necessary equipment has long since been scrapped or shipped to the Far East and a nucleus of skilled workers is no longer available, it will take far more than some subsidies and the pronouncements of tenured analysts to beat plows into machine tools and battle tanks.

Many academics who advocate "free trade" on the grounds that steel is "not as critical to our security" simply lack a basic understanding of the material. While it is true that plastics, composites, and lightweight alloys can be applied in numerous ways to great advantage, steels offer strength, stiffness, toughness, and ductility in an inexpensive material that can be readily cast, formed, machined, and heat-treated. In the words of *Structure and Properties of Engineering Alloys* author William Smith,

> No other engineering material offers such a desirable combination of properties at such a low cost as does plain-carbon steel. . . . [T]he highly industrialized countries of the world are still living in an "iron age," and will continue to do so into the foreseeable future.

Another common error of the free-traders is the assumption that steel is a commodity lacking any differences in grade or in point of origin. Even those who ought to know better tend to speak of steel in only a generic sense, perhaps implying low-carbon structural steel. Yet there are a host of special applications that demand higher-quality steels of specific grades, compositions, and heat treatments. The success of the domestic steel industry as a whole historically provided the protective umbrella beneath which certain companies were able to make specialty steels available in reduced quantities to small-business buyers. Many of these purchasers may be too small to be on the radar of academic case studies, but they make important contributions to the national security of the United States.

One field that has been hurt indirectly by the steel crisis is the custom-gun-barrel industry. Unlike in Europe and in much of the rest of the world, a large portion of the skill and equipment for producing these critical components in the United States has been dispersed among a group of independent craftsmen who serve both the civilian and military markets. My father, Barrett "Boots" Obermeyer of Obermeyer Rifled Barrels, is one of these men. Among his many contributions to national defense have been the manufacture of the barrels used to test the armor on the military's Bradley vehicle, Oerlikon cannon barrels for recommissioned minesweepers, and the barrels on the version of the Knight's Armament SR-25 rifle currently issued to the SEAL's and Special Forces. Another Wisconsin-based shop, Krieger Barrels, is a producer of barrels for the Barrett M82A1 "Light Fifty" rifle as well as test barrels for Lake City Army Ammunition Plant. The success of these and other projects has relied on the knowledge base maintained by small businesses of this type, which have, in

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turn, depended on domestic sources of specialty metals.

My father, for instance, has remained a one-man operation for most of his career, and, as such, there are limitations on the quantity of steel he requires and on how much he can afford to purchase at any given time. Ideally, a consumer of steel would make purchases on an as-needed basis through a stocking distributor, thereby avoiding the difficulty of large outlays and high inventories, and this is a common practice for industrial users of plain-carbon steels. For high-quality specialty steels such as the chromium-molybdenum alloy used to make gun barrels, the process is more difficult. Such steels were stocked at one time by US Metalsource Corp., but that company declared bankruptcy in 1993, and its assets were ultimately sold at auction.

Another supplier, CSC (formerly Copperweld Steel) sold barrel steel in small-quantity runs of approximately 6,000-8,000 pounds. Citing "market conditions that have dramatically deteriorated due to the competitive pressures of both foreign imports and industry overcapacity," CSC filed for bankruptcy in January 2001 and ceased operations three months later. With dozens of steel-industry bankruptcies over a five-year period, the surviving companies have focused on keeping their doors open rather than on filling all of the market niches formerly occupied by their vanished competitors.

As the remaining inventories of CSC steel have been consumed, barrel-makers have sought new suppliers, but the surviving companies are either in questionable health or demand very large minimum-order quantities—or both. Republic Technologies International, for instance, which has been the nation's largest producer of high-quality steel bars, filed for Chapter 11 in April 2001 and was purchased from bankruptcy in August 2002 to become Republic Engineered Products. Beyond Republic, the most favorable terms demanded by the remaining steel companies have involved minimum orders of approximately 90,000 pounds. For a custom-rifle-barrel shop, this could represent four- or five-years' supply of steel, depending on the size of the operation, and perhaps much more for craftsmen engaged in making smaller items. This places a tremendous burden on the smaller manufacturers, who have to coordinate pooled purchases in order to avoid making what would be, for some of them, impossibly large outlays.

Foreign trade does not provide a suitable answer. European producers of barrel steel also demand high purchase quantities to make it worth their while to ship to this country, and the quality of their steel is inconsistent. One custom manufacturer in the United Kingdom has even considered hooking up with an *ad hoc* purchase pool in the United States.

In fact, the demand for quality steels that actually meet specification goes far beyond the gun-barrel industry to many other applications where lives could be at risk either from poor product performance or from the damage associated with catastrophic failure. The failure of pressure vessels, for instance, can easily have lethal consequences. As a result, they are designed and constructed in accordance with accepted standards, such as the Boiler and Pressure Vessel Code of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME), under the supervision of third-party inspection agencies.

The machinery manufacturer for whom I worked during the last six years began producing parts built under the ASME Code in the late 1990's. One of these products consisted of a plate into which numerous steam passages were machined using a deep-hole drilling process. After installing our new drilling machine and beginning production, we noted that the drill heads were wearing in a way that would require us to replace them after only a few holes. Since the process, the machine, and the material were all new to our company and the holes were several feet deep, we assumed that perhaps this was par for the course—something to investigate further at some point, but not an urgent priority. Then, one day, the machinist informed me that, for the most recent part, the drill heads had lasted for dozens of holes rather than just a few. After performing some additional drilling and verifying the results against the serial-number records of the parts in question, we soon determined that the differences correlated exactly with two different sources of steel.

The steel in question was pressure-vessel-quality plate, accompanied by material test reports from each manufacturer. Every component in the end product can be traced to its source in the event of failure. In this case, some of the plates had been purchased from Bethlehem Steel and others from the Ukraine, and the sets of material data looked similar. At a loss, we sent steel chips recovered from the drilling process to a laboratory for testing. The results showed that the report from the Ukrainian steel company was fictitious; not all of the elements were even within the specified allowable composition range for the type of steel in question. In particular, the Ukrainian steel possessed an abnormally high silicon content, which was responsible for the difference in tool wear.

Another instance of deliberate falsification occurred in a large number of steel flanges imported from China during the 1990's. According to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission,

> the suspect flanges marked "China" were sold to US suppliers through several trading companies and contained cracks, inclusions, and slugged weld repairs and were constructed from two pieces of material.

The Chinese flanges, however, were marked as complying with a standard for forgings. Furthermore,

> the suspect flanges were manufactured with ring inserts welded to the inside diameter of the flange and the outer surfaces were machined. Consequently, neither the welding nor the two-piece construction would be detected during a visual inspection. Other flanges were found with slugged weld repairs to the flange hub, and still others failed to meet the material specification requirements for thermal treatment, mechanical properties, or chemistry.

After the NRC issued a warning in response to an alert from the National Board of Boiler and Pressure Vessel Inspectors, similar flanges were discovered at two nuclear power plants.

A more recent case came to light in December 2002, when Illinois-based Weldbend Corporation filed suit in federal district court against three companies it accused of illegally importing falsely marked Chinese pipe fittings and steel flanges, claiming that the defendants "jeopardized the safety of individuals who use buildings and facilities in which such fittings and flanges are installed." The lawsuit also states that Weldbend became aware of the alleged conspiracy when Chinese manufacturers solicited company representatives to participate in the scheme.

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Whether the motive is incompetence, fraud, economic warfare waged by state-controlled industries, or some combination thereof, not all foreign suppliers' claims about the steel and steel products they sell can be considered reliable. It is possible that, over time, the veracity of foreign steel manufacturers and steel-product suppliers and the quality of their products will come into line with that of their vanishing counterparts in the United States, but such a scenario is small comfort to those who have been harmed economically by unethical tactics, let alone those who may suffer harm in the future through the failure of a product built from fraudulently certified material. Bethlehem Steel, the American company whose pressure-vessel plate material we found to have been properly made and documented, filed for bankruptcy in October 2001, and its assets were ultimately acquired by the International Steel Group in May 2003.

The example of pressure-vessel materials and equipment touches on another trade-related issue that has received almost no attention outside of industry, let alone from the free-trade cheering section, yet it demonstrates how foreign bodies use means other than tariffs to protect against American industries. In order for certain types of products to be sold in Europe, they must bear a conformity assessment mark, known as the CE mark, which indicates compliance with any applicable European directives. A wide variety of parts, ranging from piping to pressure cookers and valves to vessels, has been required to conform to the European Pressure Equipment Directive (PED) since May 29, 2002.

Ostensibly, the purpose of PED was to promote free trade by establishing a single pressure-vessel standard throughout the European Union, but the truth is somewhat more complicated. Long before the advent of PED, the ASME Code was accepted worldwide as a design standard, subject to certain additional requirements in some jurisdictions; it was recognized even in European countries such as Germany and Switzerland, which had their own codes. A true effort at promoting free trade would have incorporated, or at the very least recognized, materials and procedures conforming to the existing international standard. This has not been the case.

There are three methods for approving material under the PED system. The first involves the use of materials conforming to harmonized European standards, which are not complete and, as the Department of Commerce has noted, "incorporate material specifications slightly different from those found in the ASME." A second method, known as the European Approval of Materials (EAM), was meant to allow non-European materials specifications to be approved by the European Commission. Accordingly, ASME submitted its material specifications to this process. Unfortunately, as described in the March 2002 issue of ASME's newsletter, *The Mark*, each data sheet "was contested by at least one European Member State," and a European Commission working party subsequently ruled that "the PED prohibits the issuance of an EAM covering a type of material that is covered by a European harmonized standard." This would be analogous to assembling children's recreational kits for export (there is, in fact, a Toy Directive, although it functions somewhat differently from PED), only to be told by European bureaucrats that, while they have not yet finalized the list of allowable crayon colors, it certainly will not include anything already made by Crayola.

American manufacturers have been forced to resort to a final alternative known as a Particular Material Appraisal (PMA). This means that the manufacturer must pay to have a PED-certified Notified Body review and approve the suitability of every heat of material each time it is used in a different application or product, at substantial expense and wasted effort. In practical terms, if a company does any amount of export work for the European Union, it will likely have to obtain PMA's for all materials used on those product types in order to ensure compliance without resorting to complex segregation schemes.

The PED system has effectively imposed a nontariff barrier to the European market. There is no comparable restraint of trade in the other direction, because the ASME recognizes the materials specifications of other national and international organizations, including those of the European Committee for Standardization. Furthermore, the ASME is a professional society, not an instrument of national policy, and some of its active members stand to gain financially from PED, including those providing certified inspection services.

In any case, the additional burdens associated with PED hurt the competitiveness of American companies who choose to comply, and they have caused other firms to question whether certification is worth the trouble. When PED first began to loom on the horizon, our company seriously considered the possibility of not playing the game, because, at the time, money was tight and the European market represented only a small number of installation opportunities for what was then a fairly limited product offering. American manufacturers and suppliers for whom the sale of pressure vessels and related equipment to Europe represents only a small fragment of their business have faced the same decision. The resident pressure-vessel expert who steered our company through these issues recently provided a ballpark estimate of $100,000 as a start-up cost for compliance with PED; annually, PED compliance will add 30 to 50 percent to the expense of maintaining an ASME Code program.

The trade debate must go beyond simple assertions like those of Martin Anderson that "protection is always a stupid and counterproductive policy." Other parts of the world use various forms of protection very effectively against the United States, including cases of deceit and regulation that are fairly technical in nature and therefore receive almost no mainstream news coverage. While it is neither necessary nor desirable for Americans to adopt similar unsavory tactics, there must be some recognition that the extreme free-trade position is the equivalent of unilateral disarmament in the face of a belligerent enemy.

At the same time, discussions regarding steel need to take into account issues of quality, safety, and national security, as well as secondary effects on other vital industries. The consequences of the ongoing deindustrialization of the United States are far too important for debates about related policies to be left to the talking heads who think that steel is now "less critical" and that maintaining domestic production capability is no longer necessary. Otherwise, 21st-century America, instead of remaining in the "iron age" of industrialization, will find the great questions of the time being solved—through the alchemy of the new economy—by fool's gold.

Eric J. Obermeyer writes from Calumet, Michigan.

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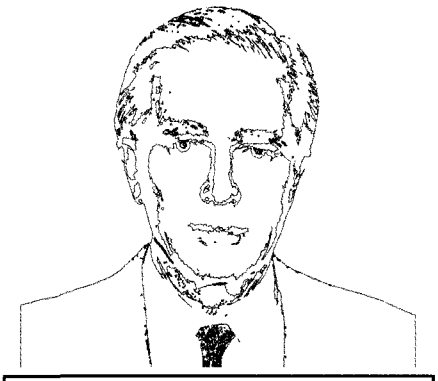
by George McCartney

Monsters



Monster

Produced by Zodiac Productions Inc.
Written and directed by Patty Jenkins
Distributed by Newmarket Film Group

The Fog of War: Eleven Lessons From the Life of Robert S. McNamara

Produced by @radical.media and Senart Films
Directed by Errol Morris
Distributed by Sony Pictures Classics

In *Monster*, director Patty Jenkins rehearses yet again the pitiful career of Aileen Wuornos (Charlize Theron), the Florida highway prostitute who gunned down seven of her johns in 1989. For her professional malpractice, the Sunshine State executed her in 2002. As legal remedies go, this one seems to have been grossly ill-advised.

Although Wuornos was unquestionably guilty, she should have been spared on both moral and practical grounds. First, she was almost certainly insane by the time she turned murderous. Second, sentencing her to death guaranteed she would become yet another celebrity victim whose many fans would annoy decent folks with their endless clamor on her behalf.

Media attention to Wuornos' sordid story was relentless from the first. The tabloids gleefully dubbed her America's first female serial killer, a meritorious distinction to be sure, but one earned, alas, much earlier than the 20th century. More respectable media outlets pondered the meaning of Wuornos, sociologically speaking. Was she a harbinger of a general female uprising against male beastliness? Activists strove to transfigure her into an heroic martyr. Radical feminists thought that, while her methods were unsound, her actions had to be understood in the context of ubiquitous male viciousness. Lesbians convinced themselves that Wuornos had been railroaded by a justice system repelled by her off-hours same-sex dalliances, especially her love affair with Tyria Moore (Christina Ricci), the young woman who would become her Judas, betraying her to the police. In short, Wuornos became a media opportunity for those who wanted to use her notoriety to their own ends.

Wuornos claimed that she only shot clients who were attempting to rape and kill her. Dead men never speak, of course, but it seems highly improbable that all her victims were homicidal rapists. As for her lesbianism, Wuornos hardly seems an ideal poster girl. She used sex opportunistically for material reward and was not discriminating about her partners. This is, after all, the hooker's M.O. Her relationship with Moore—the romantic centerpiece of Jenkins' film—seems to have been one of convenience more than passion. Homeless and broke when they met, Wuornos must have thought the middle-class Moore a likely meal ticket. If Wuornos' interest in her was driven by desire at all, the passion was remarkably short-lived, lasting only a few months. As it turned out, Moore had no financial wherewithal, which may explain the brevity of romance in their year-long liaison. What's more, Wuornos had been in several heterosexual affairs over the years. She was so taken with one lover she contemplated suicide when he left her.

What is known with certainty is this: Wuornos was the product of nearly nonstop betrayal. Her drug-addled father skipped out on her before she was born; her mother packed her off to live with abusive grandparents and left town; when she was 13, someone fathered a child with her, who was put up for adoption at birth. When she ran away at 14, no one bothered to look for her. On her own, she turned to prostitution to support herself. There is little doubt that she suffered physical and psychological abuse at the hands of men over the years. That is what happens to prostitutes, whether they choose their profession or, like Wuornos and so many others, are pushed into it by sordid circumstance. It is no wonder that she went mad.

Jenkins portrays Wuornos as a monster of cynicism and anger who is briefly redeemed when she belatedly discovers her capacity for love in a lesbian relationship. In light of the known facts, this interpretation of events is dubious at best. As for the killings, Jenkins is relatively even-handed. The first is shown to have been committed in self-defense against a paranoid sadist who beats Wuornos into submission before she can turn her gun on him. After killing him, she goes into a war-whooping frenzy. It is as though the dam of her pent-up anger has finally burst, letting loose the poison of three decades. It is a catharsis she will be compelled to repeat again and again, even though Jenkins shows her other victims to be pathetic schlubs who mean her no bodily harm. Jenkins wants us to sympathize with Wuornos as a woman so damaged by some men that she cannot help seeing all men as predators deserving death at her hands. She conveniently overlooks Wuornos' earlier penchant for violence. In at least two instances, she held others, men and women, at gunpoint while committing robberies. Wuornos' behavior was clearly driven by something far deeper than the forces modishly arrayed in the sex war.

Theron's portrayal of Wuornos has won her an Oscar and a Golden Globe. Her performance is indisputably a *tour de force*. She made her glamorous self into an ugly hulk of a woman and used dental prosthetics to twist her face into a perpetual scowl. She gained 30 pounds and developed a truculent underclass gait. In the film, her flat-footed bulk warns others to stand clear or else. It is her eyes, however, enhanced by nearly black contact lenses, that say it all. They dart and glare, two paranoid marbles rolling about in her skull. Ricci is also excellent as the whiny, manipulative Moore (renamed Selby, possibly for legal reasons). She uses her unusually large eyes and Kewpie-doll chin to suggest a combination of childishness and calculation. Impressive as they are, however, what do these

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performances serve—a partial version of the truth, heavily edited to make a muted plea for lesbianism? As subjects, both of these deeply troubled women seem more suited to psychiatric investigation than to dramatic interpretation.

Robert McNamara, secretary of defense in the Kennedy and Johnson administrations from 1961 to 1968, is another kind of monster—a freak of pure reason. In the fascinating *Fog of War*, his extended interview with the skilled documentarian Errol Morris, he repeatedly punctuates his observations with the word *absurd*. Recounting whatever had been unpredictable or illogical on his watch, from the behavior of Fidel Castro to the bellicosity of General Vo Nguyen Giap, he croaks, "Absurd!" It is his term for incomprehensible outrage. But isn't the absurd what always happens in human affairs? And shouldn't he have expected as much?

In the film, McNamara sits at a desk to deliver the 11 lessons of war. (Why only 11?) The lessons are little more than platitudes that could be multiplied indefinitely. "Empathize with your enemy" is number one. "There's something beyond one's self" ranks third. Number 11 is a real revelation: "You can't change human nature." But why not go for apostolic gravitas with a 12th? He might have borrowed a line from *The Great Gatsby*: "You can't repeat the past." This is the lesson that McNamara knows he needs to learn but cannot quite bring himself to master. In imagination, he seems doomed to go over the same ground again and again.

Like Gatsby, McNamara is a self-invented man who rose from obscurity to gain the recognition of America's elite, only to fall into disgrace. Of course, unlike Gatsby's fall, McNamara's was cushioned by his many connections, which helped him land a long stint at the World Bank. Still, it must gall him that he will always be linked to the Vietnam debacle. If only he could return and repeat his steps, avoiding the mistakes. This being impossible, he has settled for putting it all into perspective, in the hope that he can still rescue his reputation.

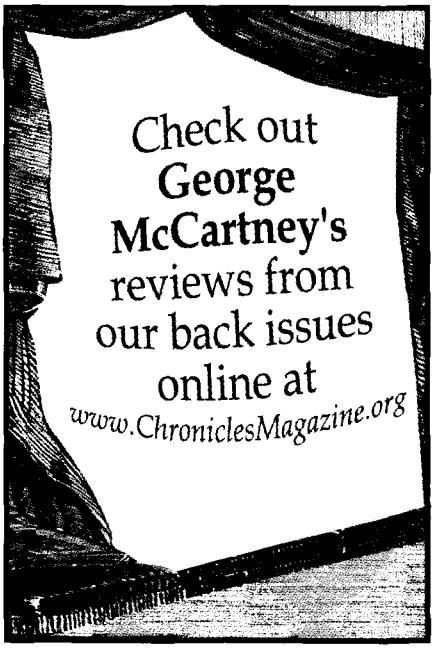
Before sharing his lessons, he wants us to recognize his brilliance. He tells us how he aced his exams in grammar school and was the first in his family to attend college, graduating *magna cum laude* from the University of California. He also informs us that he went to Harvard Business School and afterward became its youngest assistant professor. Later, he tested off the charts on Ford Motors' recruitment exams. Apparently, this whiz kid, this "IBM on legs," as he was dubbed while a tactical planner in the Air Force, thinks his test-taking skills will convince us that his "mistakes" as secretary of defense were somehow unavoidable given the impossible circumstances in which he found himself.

The first thing we hear him say is this: "We all make mistakes. I don't know of any military commander who has not made mistakes." Later, he remarks that "there's a wonderful phrase: the fog of war."

Applying it to the Vietnam War, he says it means that "the completeness of our understanding wasn't up to the challenge." How is that for bureaucratic doublespeak? When Morris urges him to discuss Vietnam more directly, he insists on going back to 1945 to talk about his role as a logistical analyst under Curtis Le May. He recalls his part in the firebombing of 67 Japanese cities. "In a single night, 100,000 Japanese men, women, and children burned to death." When Morris asks him, "Were you aware of this?" he replies, "Well, I was part of the mechanism." *Mechanism*? It is the choice of the perfect bureaucrat who is always on guard against taking full responsibility. McNamara goes on to recall Le May saying that, had America lost the war, he and McNamara would have been tried as war criminals. The observation seems calculated to dilute his guilt for having ordered Rolling Thunder, the bombing campaign that dropped two to three times as many bombs on North Vietnam as were dropped on Europe during all of World War II. Left unsaid but clearly implied is this: If few Americans would be ready to call me a criminal for my part in the bombing of Japan, why have so many held me accountable for the campaign in Vietnam? This puts the issue wrongly, however: It is not the bombing that infuriated Americans then and now; it is the dishonesty with which the war was fought. Under both Kennedy and Johnson, McNamara disguised the nature of the conflict from the public, first pretending that it was only a matter of assisting the South Vietnamese in their struggle with the communist North and, later, after there was no hiding our involvement, pretending we were fighting to win.

McNamara is still hated by many for wasting the lives of American soldiers in a war of half-measures fought with a no-win policy. His strategy of micromanaged containment led him to flout the military experts who, from the beginning, wanted to put in a much larger force. At the behest of Kennedy and then Johnson, who both feared the domestic fallout of the war, he declared we would quickly establish South Vietnam's viability, even though he knew her government had no chance of survival without our long-term military presence. As you watch him wrestle to explain this today, our current entanglement in Iraq comes painfully to mind. Substitute Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld for McNamara, and the parallel is frighteningly complete.

Above all, McNamara wants to warn us about his obsession, nuclear war. He recalls the Cuban missile crisis, positioning himself and Kennedy as heroes for restraining the joint chiefs of staff, who wanted to invade Cuba. He reminds us that, although we were not sure at the time, subsequent intelligence discovered that 162 of the Soviet missiles in Cuba had been armed with nuclear warheads. Furthermore, in 1992, Fidel Castro told him that, had American forces invaded, he would have launched those missiles at Florida. "In Cuba, rational individuals came that close to a nuclear war," McNamara concludes, holding his thumb and forefinger an inch apart. Maybe, but should we be so quick to believe Castro, the renowned braggadocio? After all, few strategies are cheaper than threatening after the fact. And we must ask this question also: Can we trust the human judgment of an IBM on legs any more today than we could 40 years ago? ◦C



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by Chilton Williamson, Jr.

Never the Twain Shall Meet

Maps show Wyoming beginning in the western Black Hills at its northeastern corner and east of the Laramie Mountains at the southeastern one. Yet the beginning of a thing (or, for that matter, its end) is rarely so simple. To me, it is obvious that Wyoming begins on the western slope of the Snowy Range in the Medicine Bow Mountains, just west of the Continental Divide and 120 miles from the Wyoming-Nebraska line. Coasting down Highway 130 from Libby Flats and Lake Marie, you can see, feel, and smell the transition as the road curves past Ryan Park and breaks out into sagebrush foothills with a view to the broad mesas beyond the wide valley of the North Platte River. Here, the high desert country commences, and with it the blue sky and white sun, cumulus clouds, clay bluffs, and sage smell that mean western Wyoming, vintage Wyoming—the *real* Wyoming—for me. It is no mystery why Saratoga should please me: I lived 20 years, among the best of my life, in western Wyoming. Why my wife, a cosmopolitan girl from Pelham, New York, should be eager to move from metropolitan Laramie to a hamlet of 1,500 people is another story.

"I *like* Saratoga," Maureen insisted. "It feels good to me, and the country's the most beautiful I've seen anywhere in Wyoming."

"But there's only one good restaurant. And two fair ones."

"That's really what we have in Laramie."

"And St. Anne's doesn't have a full-time priest these days."

"But the bishop will have to send one eventually, won't he?"

"Where do you plan on having your nails done?"

"There's a manicure and pedicure salon on Bridge Street, across from the Wolf Hotel. I checked when we were here in October, and you were out hunting."

Plans for a removal to Saratoga had advanced further than I had suspected, it seemed.

"It would make you happy to live again in the kind of place you love, wouldn't it?"

Yes, actually. It would.

"I could be content living here, too," Maureen finished. "I can be content living *any* place, once I'm settled there."

The town of Saratoga has been in economic depression for years as the Forest Service plays cat-and-mouse with Louisiana Pacific, switching on and off the supply of timber to the company's lumber mill. The wealthy outsiders with their luxurious estates in the surrounding area seem to be doing just fine, however. We passed the airport at the edge of town (admiring someone's elegant Lear jet parked on the tarmac), slowed for a deer family ambling across the main drag between a package store and a gas station, and checked in to the Saratoga Inn. I swam laps in the steaming outdoor pool fed by the hot mineral springs while Maureen showered and changed, and we went on to the bar at the Wolf for a drink. The Wolf Hotel, built in 1893, has been owned since 1974 by Doug Campbell, a native of my old hometown of Kemmerer, and his wife, Kathleen. We ordered martinis from the barman, and Doug came from the kitchen to chat about the old days, hunting elk along Commissary Ridge and fishing for trout in Spring Creek and the Hamsfork with Don Kominsky, Al Lenati, and Arch Antilla. Don and Arch are both dead, but Al, so far as either of us had heard, was still going strong at 80. (Wyoming is a big small town spread over 97,000 square miles, allowing all 460,000 of us room to breathe while staying in touch with one another, more or less.) In the comfortable restaurant done in golden oak and a dark print wallpaper, seated near the gas fire beside the tall window, we ate lamb chops with baked potato and drank a good red wine while observing the other diners, in wintertime a mostly local clientele.

"They have a fairly limited menu here," Maureen remarked. "That's one reason the food is so good."

"It is good. Doug could make a killing with this place in Laramie."

"It might be *too* sophisticated for them—you know, in the sense of being not 'sophisticated' enough for the university crowd."

At the center of the bridge over the North Platte, I stopped the car to view the perennial flocks of resident mallard ducks huddled darkly on ice sheets shining white in the light of a silver moon.

"Good night, ducks," I said as I let the brake out.

"They look so peaceful. But I thought ducks flew south in the fall. Don't they get cold in wintertime in Wyoming?"

"They stay warm in the mineral springs, like everyone else. I had a dozen or more of them in the pool with me this afternoon."

"Oh, you did not. Did you really?"

Wearing only my swimsuit and carrying a towel on my arm, I walked the 30 yards from the hotel room to the pool in the zero-plus cold and swam a few laps on my back, looking up through clouds of sulphurous steam at the stars, for a nightcap.

"I'm sure, if we lived here, you could make arrangements with the Inn to use their pool every day," Maureen suggested when I got back to the room. It's wonderful how women's minds work when they are enthusiastic about something.

In the morning, we drove west out of town on Bridge Street to Jack Creek Road, carrying with us a picnic lunch, a realtor's catalogue, and my .22-250 rifle loaded and muzzle-down on the floorboard. Beyond the Platte Valley, the high desert began, rolling westward under a thin cover of tiny lichenous sage bushes. The sky was milky blue overhead, but a strong wind rocked Maureen's little Camry, and snow devils hundreds of feet high spun across the dazzling white parks tall in the Sierra Madre in the southwest. The thin snowpack thickened as the mountains drew closer, and snowsnakes wriggled across the washboard road. At the Jack Creek crossing, a golden eagle straddled a deer carcass beside the borrow pit, his wings half spread, his round golden eye fixed defiantly on the approaching car. I slowed for a closer look, but he extended

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to full spread before I could stop and lifted away in slow motion, insolently, his talons hanging below his dark underbody, and alighted 50 yards away on a post sticking up from the rancher's junk pile at a short distance from his mate. An eagle may know that he is a federally protected species, or he may not. Whichever, his attitude toward man is not dependent on his knowing or not knowing. He is Eagle, and he fears no one, his sole natural enemies being the infrequent poacher and the religious Indian (another protected species). Years ago, Fred Chambers, driving between Kemmerer and Green River, collided with a bird as tall as a fence post that had assumed, apparently, that the oncoming pickup was prepared to yield the right-of-way across his intended flight path. The eagle crashed through the windshield onto the passenger seat, stood up, and spread his wings, bringing the truck to a rapid halt with the bird in undisputed possession of it. Had the game warden been summoned, unquestionably Fred—not the eagle—would have been arrested.

It was quiet in the creek bottom, away from the wind and the blowing snow. The simple frame ranch house, built in the shelter of the bluff but high enough above the creek to escape the spring freshets, was hardly more than a cabin, apparently of territorial vintage. A twist of smoke streamed out flat from the chimney, but no one, excepting the eagle couple, seemed to be in residence. There are just nine working ranches left in the vicinity of Saratoga, while corporate ranchers from Denver, Phoenix, and elsewhere continue to buy up the best spreads. The old Willford Ranch, near Encampment, was purchased for a tax write-off ten or fifteen years ago by TCI in Denver, headed in those days by John Malone, whose rumored ambition is to own an uninterrupted land corridor running from New Mexico to Canada. (So what do you know about cows, John?) Not long ago, one corporate cowboy around here bought himself a herd of cattle and then let it starve to death over the winter, after neglecting to put up a haycrop himself or buy feed for his cows from a neighbor. The rich are different from you and me. (They're crazy.)

I drove Jack Creek Road as far as two four-wheel-drive rigs parked in the snow with the ramps down and the snow machines missing from the trailers.

"Have you ever had to dig out on a back road in the snow?" I asked my wife.

"*No*—thank goodness!"

"When I worked in the oil patch, Jack Mootz and I used to stick our truck in the middle of nowhere every days-off. We always had a lot of fun doing it. Today, I think I'd just as soon open a bottle of champagne and eat lunch."

The Veuve Clicquot tasted dry and light and crisp with the turkey sandwiches the hotel had put up for us. We ate with the real-estate book open across the console, poring over the incongruous, nearly unbelievable summertime pictures.

"So much land in the West, such little houses," Maureen marveled.

"No wood close at hand, to speak of. And no money, either. The West was settled by little people—miners, homesteaders, small ranchers, railroaders. They won it, and they made it. Now they're losing it."

"A hundred and fifty thousand dollars—even two hundred and fifty thousand dollars—doesn't buy you much in Saratoga."

"Only the big sky. And a few thousand square miles of public land. That's the reality of the modern West." Reverse Distributism, Belloc might have called it. (So much for the Homestead Act.)

We ate at the Wolf again that evening and met next day with the realtor in her downtown office. Viewing property with realtors is almost always a depressing business. This morning, I was reminded of my experience 30 years ago, looking for a Manhattan apartment to lease on an $8,000-per-year salary. I'm much better off financially nowadays, of course; then again, my expectations are greater, too. What confronted us now was what, in the Rocky Mountain West, has become a familiar choice. The "old" houses (dating from between about 1900 and 1930), mostly bungalows with their period charm and finished detail, hardwood floors, and brick s--t-house construction, though typically not kept up, are priced as if they were architectural gems in mint condition, despite their small size and scarcely larger lots. The new houses (built since the 1970's) are more overpriced still, owing to Westerners' nearly insurmountable prejudice in favor of jerry-built, prefab, and modular "homes" over older houses. Many of these, furthermore, are built outside of town, on a parcel of several acres—and land is at a premium today in a region where the majority of it is owned by the federal and state governments or privately leased and where white flight from the East and West coasts has put added pressure on what private land remains available.

Accompanied by the agent, we looked over a Boise-Cascade job, 30 to 40 years old, sitting on four acres in a pleasant meadow just above the floodplain of the North Platte River at Riverside and surrounded by groves of ancient cottonwood trees. The asking price was obviously all in the land, the house itself requiring at least $50,000 worth of renovation. Worse, the property was part of a subdivision and encumbered by "covenants." (Despite my best efforts not to appear un-American, undemocratic, and sniffish, real-estate people never seem to cotton to me, much.) From Riverside, we drove on to view a three-story log pile on the southeast edge of Encampment, neatly removed from town by a screen of aspen trees and with a fine view of Encampment Creek descending through a steep-sided canyon. The asking price was negotiable, the agent explained; and Maureen, after closely inspecting all three floors, was charmed. Having taken a closer look at the weathered exterior walls on the south and west sides, checked the window frames, and investigated the construction of the porch roof, I was less enthusiastic. "Well enough built for a secondary residence," I told Maureen, "but not for a primary one. It isn't half the house our old dump in Laramie is." The real-estate woman tried hard to look as if I hadn't said that.

We talked the thing over back at the Wolf that night, my wife and I. I should have known better, of course. People who come West looking to find everything ought to stay where they are, in Studio City or Locust Valley. They do not belong out here. Because the American West, basically, is still a frontier society. If you have a few million dollars to spend, it can be anything you want it to be—almost. If not, then living in the West is a trade-off between living graciously and living free: You can have one or the other; you cannot have both. We made the decision to postpone a decision until we got back to 700 E. Brady in Laramie, and had another drink. ◁C

MOVING?

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The Best Revenge

by Anthony Santelli

Meditations at Ft. Lauderdale Airport

I arrived at the Ft. Lauderdale airport to a line at the Spirit Airline ticket counter so long that I didn't even contemplate whether to wait. My flight to Laguardia wasn't until 3:20 P.M., and it was only 11:00 A.M., so, after a leisurely lunch, I dropped my bags off and decided to look for the chapel.

There was no chapel at the airport—only a meditation room. A sign on the door read: "The Meditation Room has been locked due to security reasons. If you need to use the Meditation Room, go to the nearest pay phone and dial *22. An Aviation Department representative will make it available to you. Thank you."

My curiosity was piqued: What was in the meditation room that constituted a security risk? I went to the nearest pay phone and dialed *22. It took the Aviation Department official about five minutes to show up. A meek-looking fellow in his early 60's, he sized me up intensely as if to determine whether I was a troublemaker. He asked me how long I was going to be, and I said I would need it for a half-hour or so. When I asked him why this meditation room was considered a security risk, he mumbled something about September 11 and asked me where I had been since then.

There were no bomb-making materials in the room. In fact, there was nothing in the room but three rows of ten nice-looking chairs all facing the same direction. Instead of an altar, there was a metallic picture of airplanes flying through clouds penetrated by rays from the sun, as if coming from some great celestial being.

After making my penance, and while I was enjoying the peace and quiet in the only room in the airport without a loudspeaker, it dawned on me why this room was considered a security risk: Our thoughts are free in a quiet room. In a quiet room, we can think what we want to think; we are free from the constant bombardment of information from the TV, radio, movies, magazines, newspapers, and the internet that preoccupies our minds with thoughts that are often irrelevant to our own betterment. In a quiet room, we are free to plan our futures and then to go act on those plans. And, when we make such plans, we acquire hope and are no longer afraid. Yes, they don't want us to think for ourselves because we may generate the impulse to do something! Terrorists first meditated and then decided to do something about it. That can't be allowed!

After 30 minutes, like clockwork, the Aviation Department official showed up. "You're not working . . . This is strictly for meditation," he said as he saw me writing. Yes, work—working against their plans is what they fear most. Planned action. I asked for 15 more minutes to finish my thoughts. He complained a bit and then said he would be back.

The powers of modern society know that there is no better way to control people's actions than to rule their thoughts, deciding what they think about. They know that, if they constantly tempt us with luring vices, we will eventually succumb to one or the other. And, once we are busy thinking or doing what they have lured us into, we will have no time to think about things that may truly better our lives, things which are outside of their desires and may threaten their power.

The Soviet Union used a very unsophisticated form of thought control. They openly controlled the press and threatened anyone who tried to speak out or act differently. Today, thought control is more sophisticated. There are few open threats about what you can or cannot think or about what you can or cannot do. Theoretically, we live in a free society. In order to subdue us, those in power have to bombard us with the things they want us to think about. Above all, they use fear. When we are afraid of something, we cannot help but think about it. The news leads with the war in Iraq, who shot whom in the city, where the terrorists may strike next, and a whole host of other things intended to scare us into thinking that we need to be protected from it all by them—the government; those in power. The next day, it is a different variation on the same theme, always with a different story to scare us anew and to keep us fixated on what they want us to think about.

After instilling sufficient fear, they bombard us with advertisements for fast cars, luscious food, and loose women. And economists tell us that it also helps the economy to consume, consume, consume! People almost cannot help but think: "If I'm going to die tomorrow anyway, might as well let it all hang out now. Besides, I'm doing good by creating jobs for others." September 11 led to a flurry of purchases of Corvettes. Waistlines bulged, marriages broke, and children suffered.

At an airport, these more sophisticated forms of mind control are supplemented by the constant bombardment of a crackling sound system meant to destroy any sophisticated thought: *Mr. Jones, please come to the information desk. . . . Flight 169 is now boarding rows 20 and higher.* This is accompanied by a low-level unconscious fear in many who are about to fly: *This just may be my final hour.* And, ironically, my demise may be the next piece of mind control used on prime-time news to instill fear.

This habit of fear and controlled thought is ingrained at a young age. Why else would children be prevented from playing freely? Instead, children are shuttled from one organized activity to another—one evening, soccer; the next, band; then this, then that; otherwise, the TV. Never shall one think for oneself. And the activities are always controlled.

A quiet room, by definition, makes thought control impossible. Which led me to a final thought: Let us bring back meditation before the Blessed Sacrament. If the faithful believed It is God, they would spend more time in the quiet of the Church. In the quiet, we can embrace the particular and distinct responsibilities that we each have been given. The quiet is a place where there is no fear. Faith is the opposite of fear. The quiet offers us the chance to think about our families and friends, to pray for them, and to decide to help those who are in need. The quiet enables us to take responsibility for those problems to which we are able to respond; it localizes our thoughts. Most importantly, the quiet brings us to think about the good things we have, to appreciate them, and to thank God for them. The quiet makes us happy.

Just as I was finishing this thought, the aviation official showed up again. I went back into the noise. c

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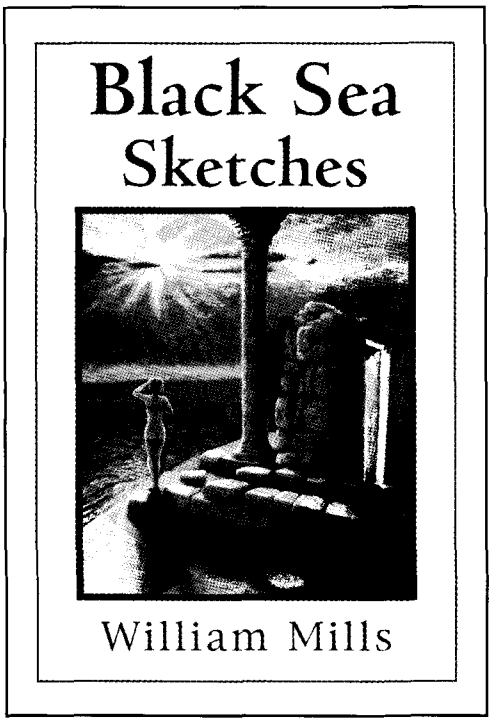
Black Sea Sketches

BLACK SEA SKETCHES is a travel book written for serious travelers, including armchair travelers. Although the author may take an occasional swim or walk the beaches, the book is much more about the history and prehistory, the culture and the contemporary scene than about recreational opportunities. It is the kind of book you would want to read before or during your own travel in these fascinating countries.

The five countries—Ukraine, Rumania, Bulgaria, Turkey, and Georgia—often share military and economic history, but cultural contrasts abound: different alphabets and languages, different religions. While most of Ukraine, Rumania, Bulgaria, and Georgia embrace the Orthodox faith, Turkey is largely Muslim, as is part of the Crimean population. All five of the countries reflect, especially architecturally, the common past of ancient Greece and, most of them, of the later Genoan commercial empire.



Rising above the glittering monuments of the past, however, are the people Mills met and the stories of their lives, often of great courage under pressure and of generosity to a stranger and a traveler.

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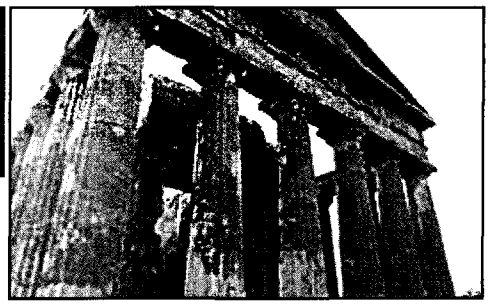

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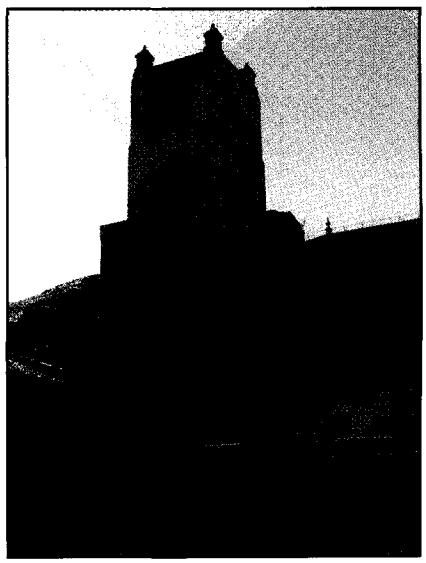

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